

STARBLAZER

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 27

12p

THE DRIFTERS OF DARGA

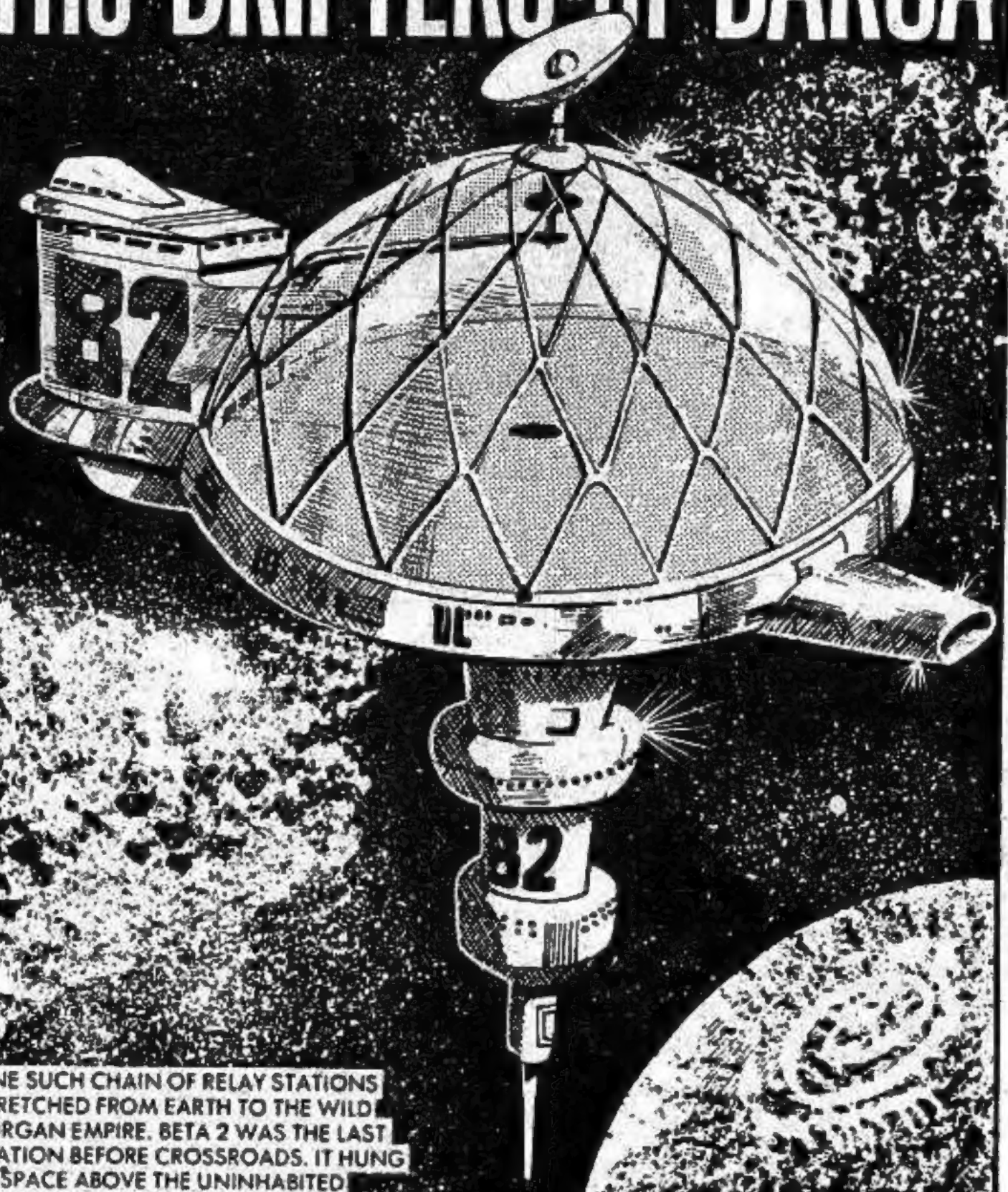


STARBLAZER



Transmitting
matter by energy
beam replaced star-
freighters in the year 2281.
Across the vast reaches of space,
energy beams relayed vast tonnages
of freight from station to station.
Whoever controlled the beams, controlled
the Universe . . . and it was at the planet
Darga two Earthmen tried desperately
to keep control from falling into the
hands of the evil Porgan killers.

The DRIFTERS of DARGA



ONE SUCH CHAIN OF RELAY STATIONS STRETCHED FROM EARTH TO THE WILD PORGAN EMPIRE. BETA 2 WAS THE LAST STATION BEFORE CROSSROADS. IT HUNG IN SPACE ABOVE THE UNINHABITED JUNGLE PLANET, DARGA.

4
FROM THE CONTROL BRIDGE INSIDE THE RECEIVING DOME, SHAW ROGERS SUPERVISED THE COUNTDOWN FOR A DELIVERY.

COMPUTER, GIVE ME A STATUS CHECK.

B2

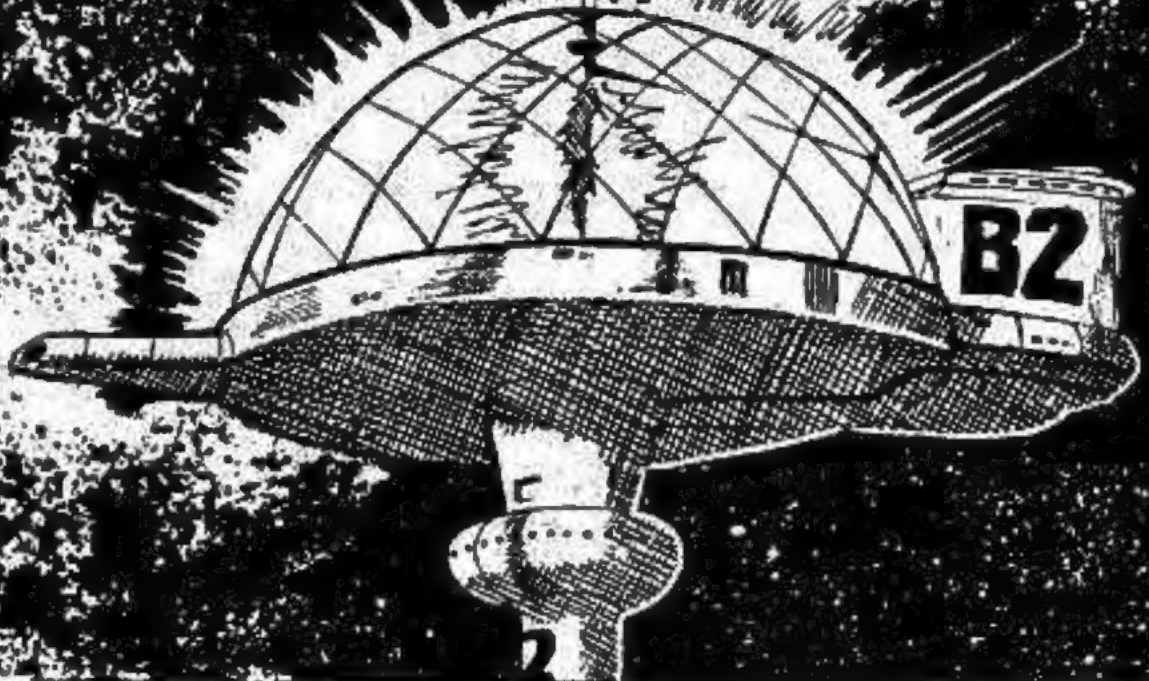
WE HAVE FREIGHT DELIVERY FROM CROSSROAD CENTRAL FOR RELAY TO BETA 4. IT WILL HAVE TO BE RELAYED DOWN TO PLANET BASE FOR STORING. CONDITIONS FOR DELIVERY ARE UNFAVOURABLE FOR TEN HOURS.



YOU HAVE CONTROL. BRING IT
IN.

THANK YOU. GOING INTO
MICRO-SECOND COUNTDOWN...

A BEAM OF PURE ENERGY ACCELERATED THROUGH SPACE, AND WAS
PICKED UP BY BETA'S ANTENNA. THE DOME FILLED WITH LIGHT THAT
CONDENSED INTO SOLID MATTER.



WHAT'S THE FREIGHT?

A GENERAL CONSIGNMENT OF ATOMIC
MINING DEVICES FOR TERRUS PLANET IN
BETA 5 SECTOR.

B2

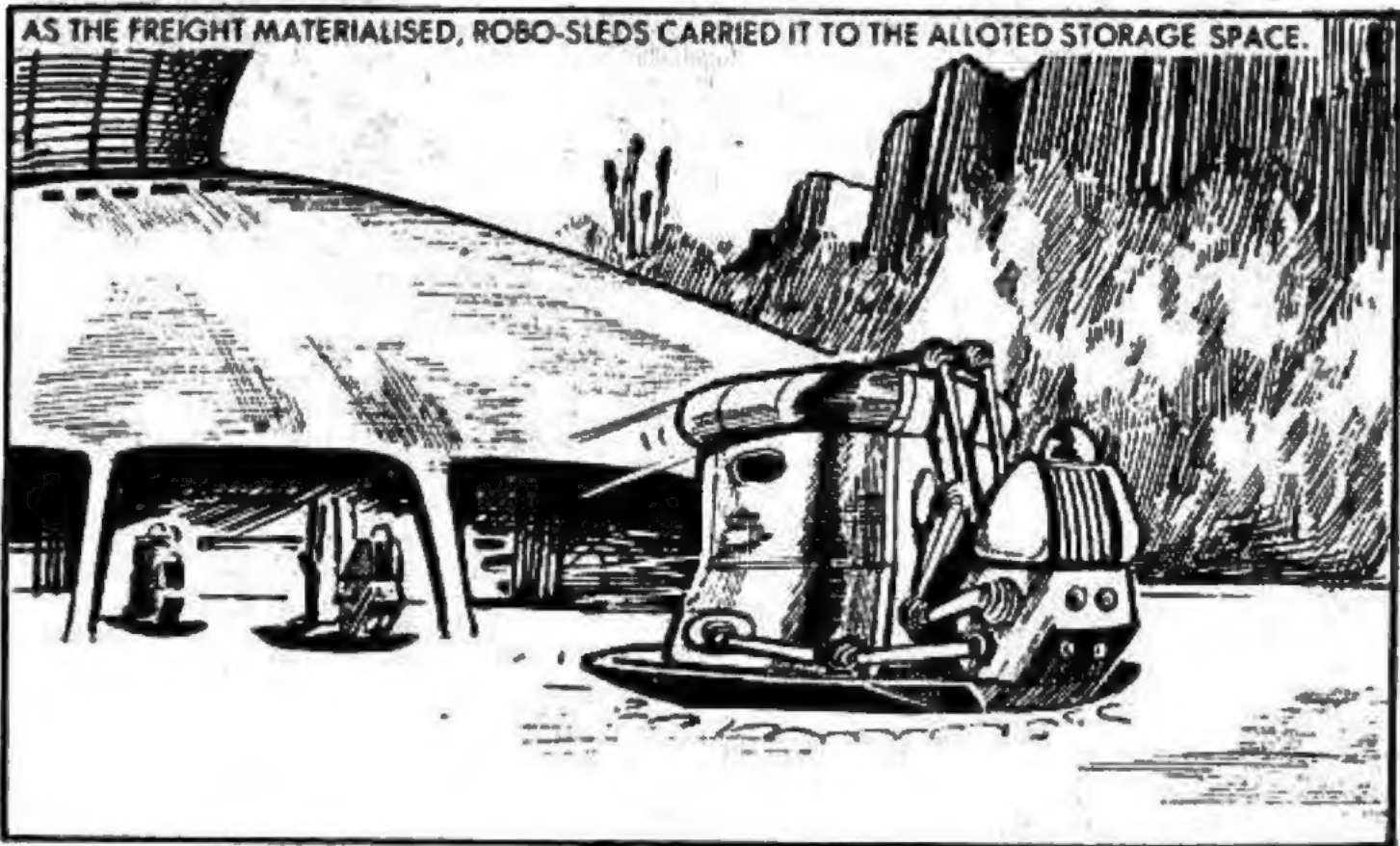
BEAM IT DOWN TO DARGA STORAGE
DEPOT. LET'S KEEP THIS DOME CLEAR!

B2

ON THE PLANET DARGA.



AS THE FREIGHT MATERIALISED, ROBO-SLEDS CARRIED IT TO THE ALLOTTED STORAGE SPACE.



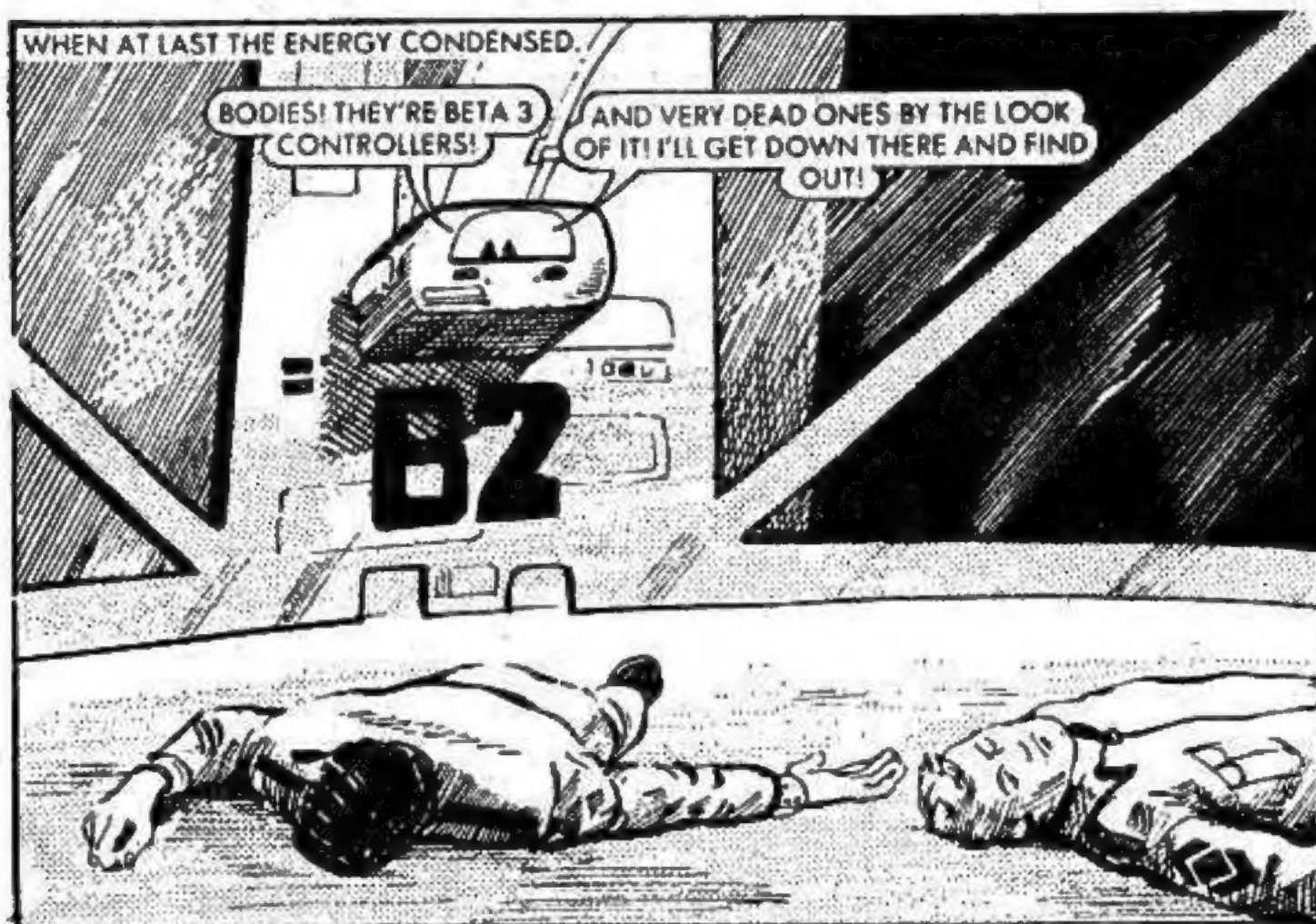


WE'RE NOT VERY BUSY AT THE MOMENT.
THERE'S A STAR GOING SUPER NOVA OUT
CROSSROADS CENTRAL WAY, SO WE
CAN GET NOTHING IN OR OUT OF THERE
FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS.

BUT WE'VE STILL THIRTY MINUTES OF
DELIVERY FROM BETA 3 BEFORE WE
CLOSE DOWN.

AS SHAW TURNED TO GO, THE COMPUTER SHRILLED AN ALARM.

ALERT, ALERT! WE HAVE UNAUTHORISED
DELIVERY. SAFE ARRIVAL PROBABILITY 22%.
ASTEROID BELT IN DIRECT LINE OF
TRANSMISSION.



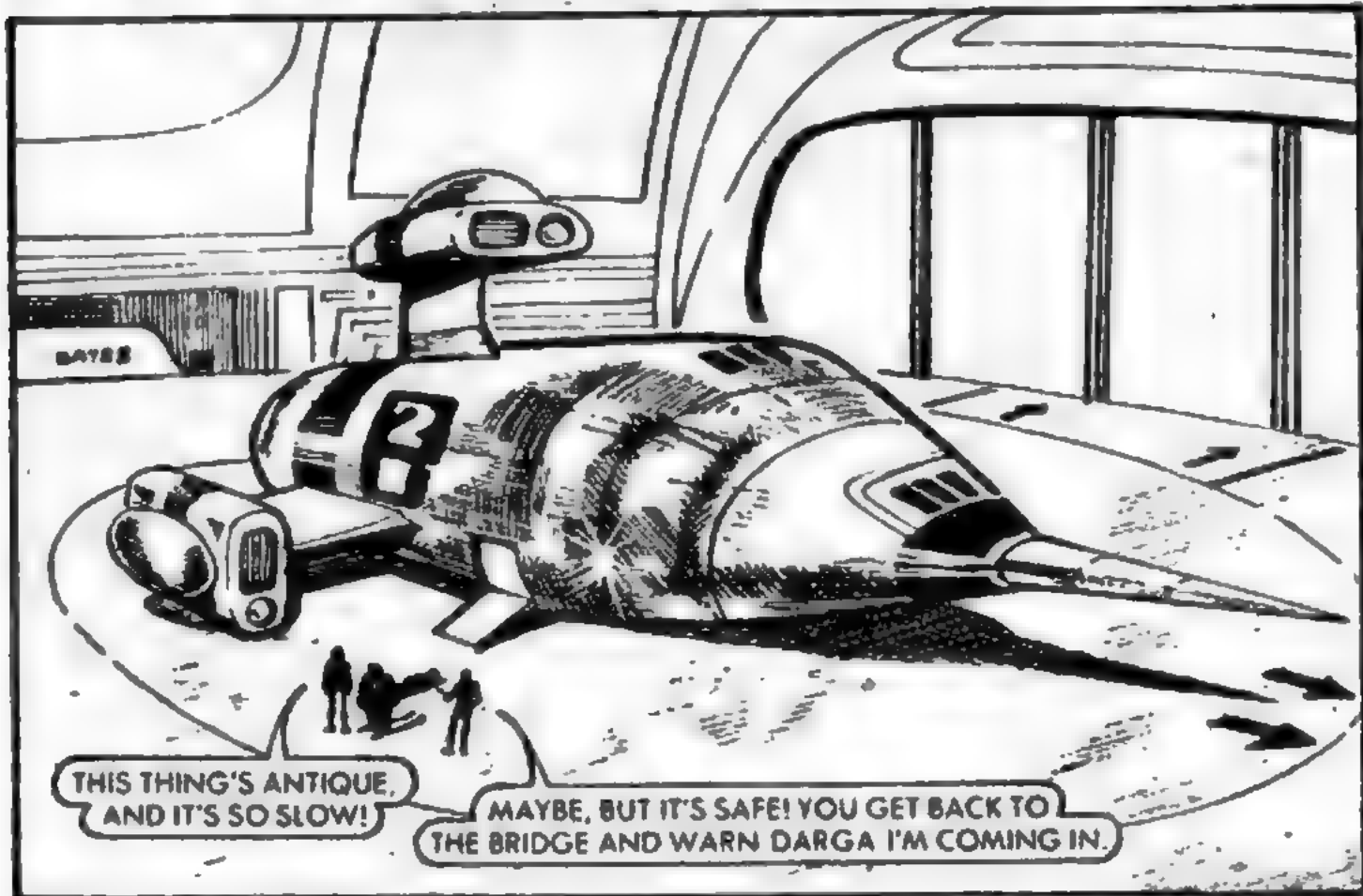
ONE OF THEM, TARG
ROGA, IS STILL ALIVE.
SEND A NUMBER 4 ROBO-SLED
IN AND I'LL MOVE THEM OUT
OF HERE.



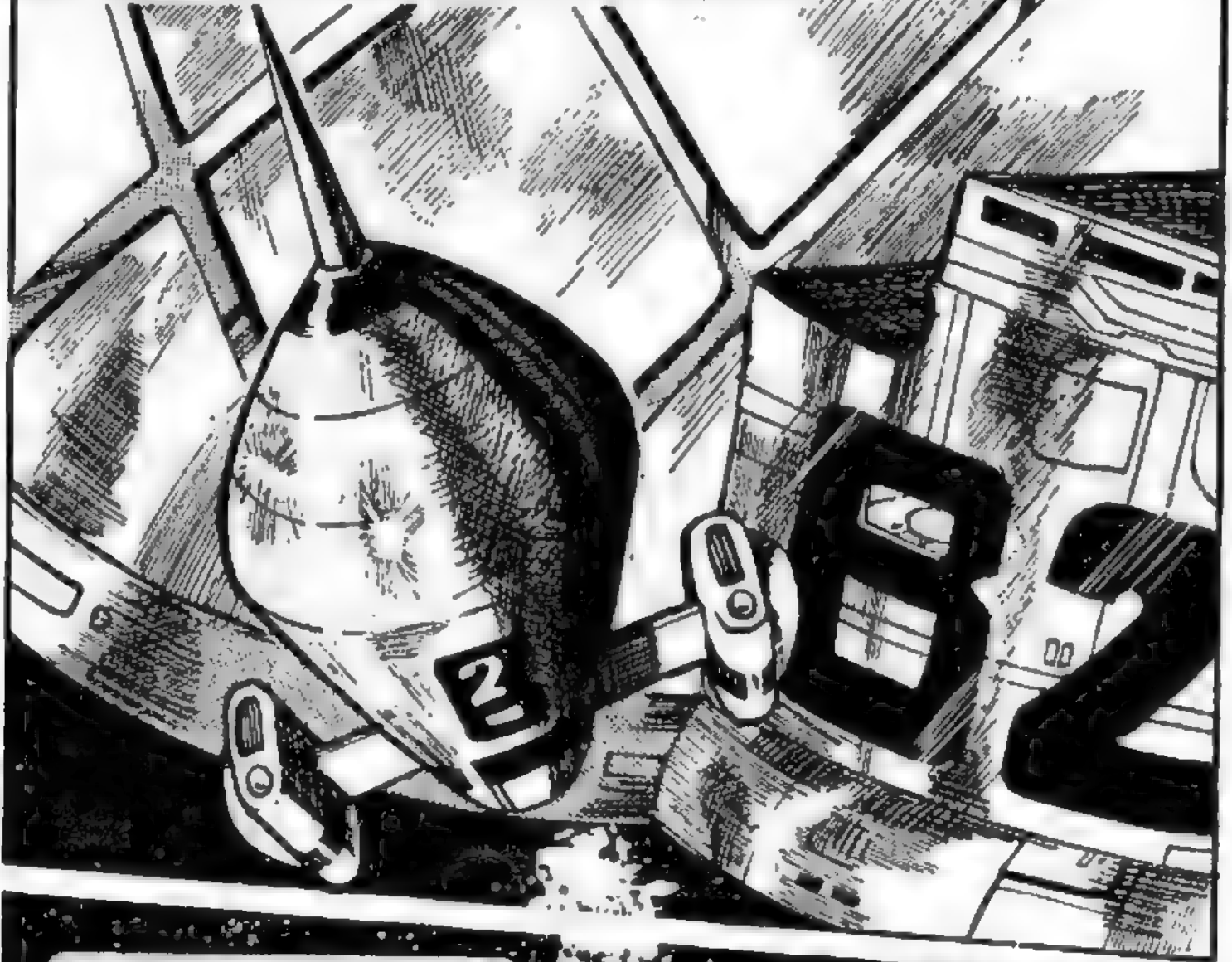
THERE'S NO KNOWING WHAT HE BEAMED
THROUGH GETTING HERE

BUT WHAT WOULD FORCE HIM TO BEAM UNDER
ANY CONDITIONS?

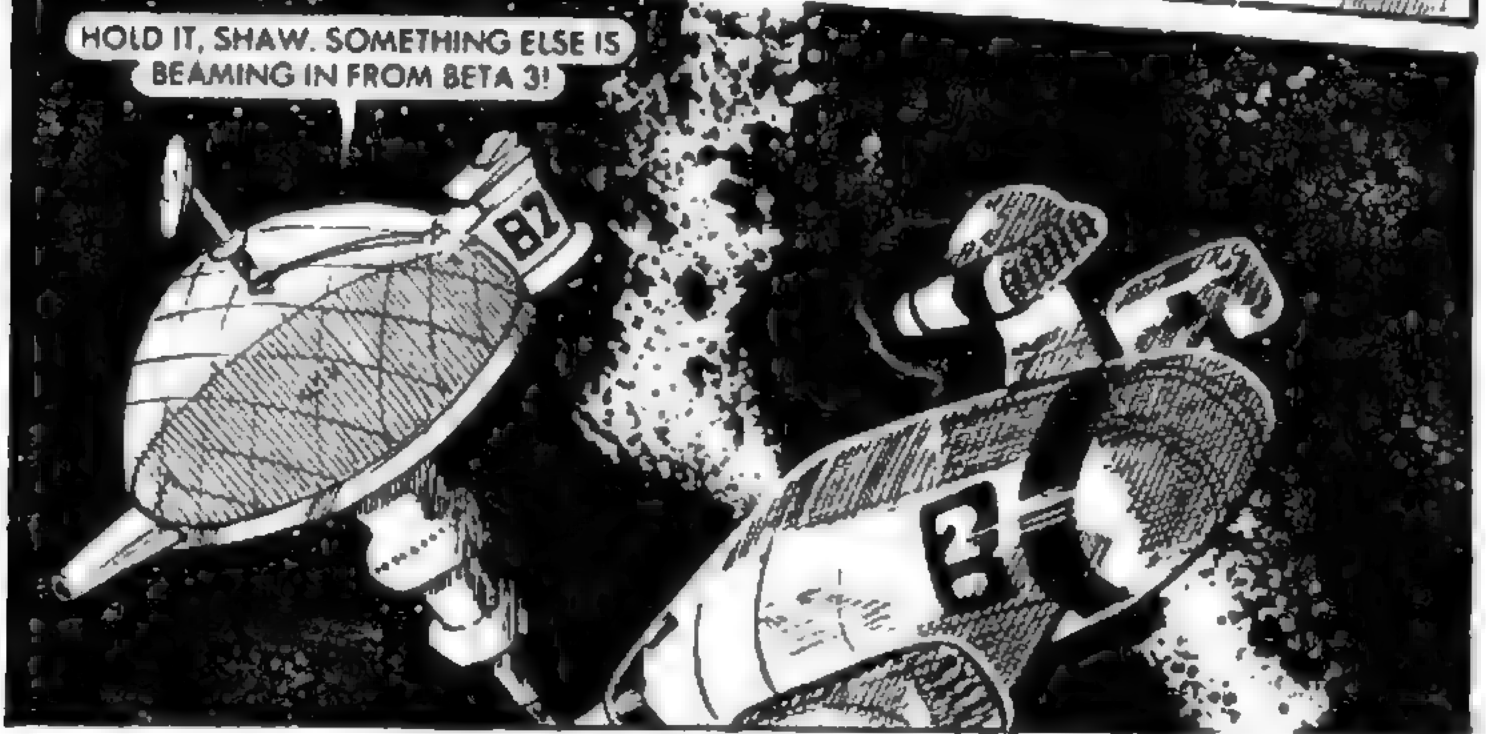




SHAW DRIFTED THE SPACE BUS OUT FROM THE STATION SPACE-LOCK AND BEGAN TO MANOEUVRE FOR PLANETARY INJECTION.



HOLD IT, SHAW. SOMETHING ELSE IS
BEAMING IN FROM BETA 3!



THAT LOOKED LIKE A NEUTRON
FLASH—BUT IT CAN'T BE!



THAT'S BRAKI! HE'S DEAD! JUST WHAT
IN THE BLUE NOVAE IS GOING ON?



BEFORE HE COULD FIGURE OUT AN ANSWER, THE BETA 3
CONTROLLER STRUGGLED FROM UNCONSCIOUSNESS...



TAKE IT EASY. TALK IN YOUR OWN
TIME.

MUST WARN CROSSROADS ...
RISKED BEAMING THROUGH ...
PORGANS INVADED ... CONTROL
BETA STATIONS ... NEXT THIS AND
THEN CROSSROADS ... MUST WARN
... CLOSE BEAMS ...



UNCONSCIOUS AGAIN. IF THE PORGANS
TAKE CONTROL OF CROSSROADS, THEN
THE GALAXY IS THEIRS!

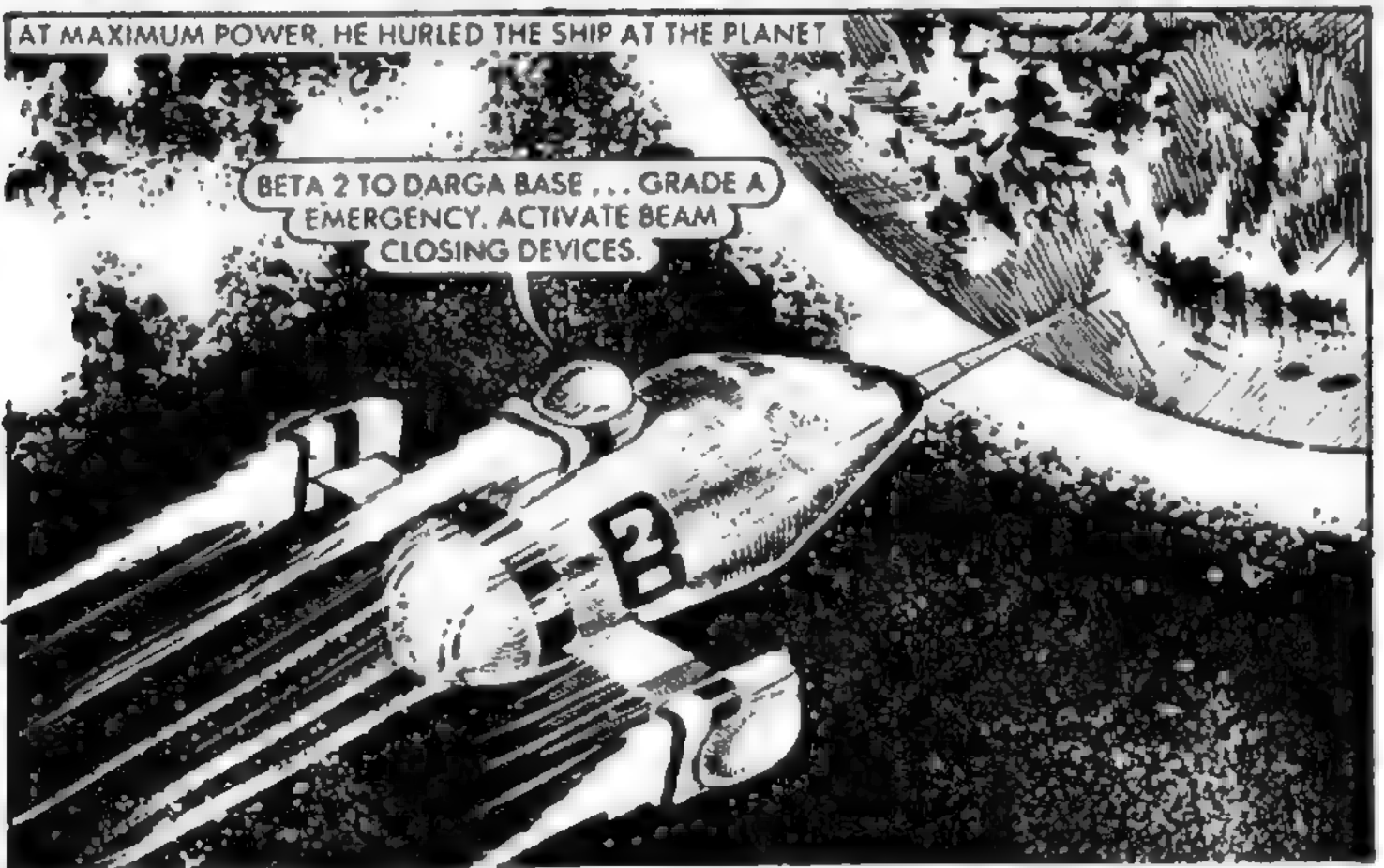


THE PORGANS MUST HAVE
BEAMED THROUGH A NEUTRON
BOMB TO KILL THE CREW. I'LL
HAVE TO WARN DARGA BASE...
THEY CAN STOP THEM.



AT MAXIMUM POWER, HE HURLED THE SHIP AT THE PLANET

BETA 2 TO DARGA BASE... GRADE A
EMERGENCY. ACTIVATE BEAM
CLOSING DEVICES.



THE SPACE BUS THUNDERED INTO THE ATMOSPHERE AND DOWN TO THE DARGA STORAGE STATION...

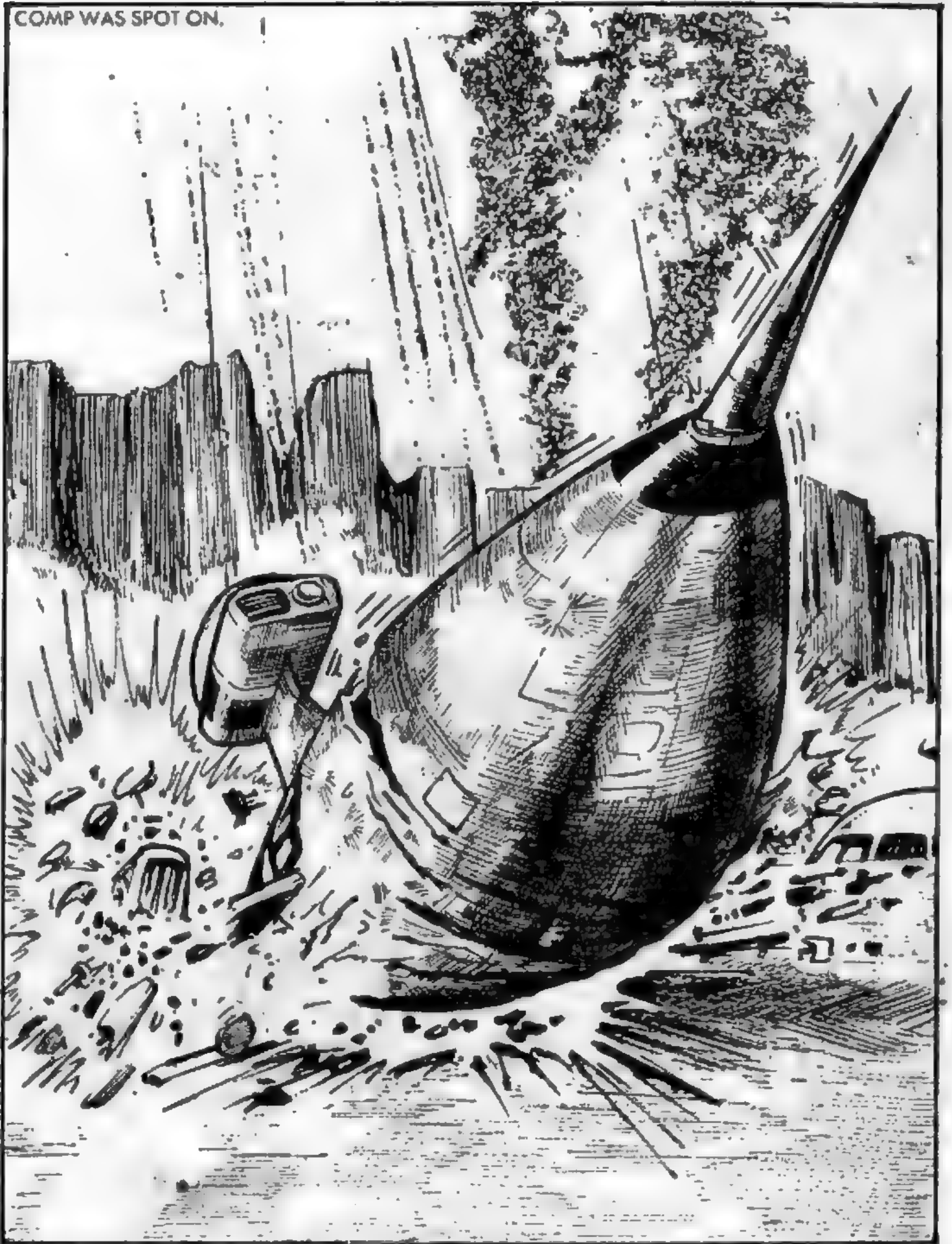
COME IN DARGA! I HAVE A MOST VITAL MESSAGE... COME IN PLEASE! NO ANSWER. DO YOU READ ME? I REPEAT, URGENT, MOST URGENT YOU KILL THE MATTER TRANSFER BEAM! URGENT!

AS THE SHIP WENT INTO LANDING HOVER A NUMBER OF FIGURES RACED FROM THE STATION.

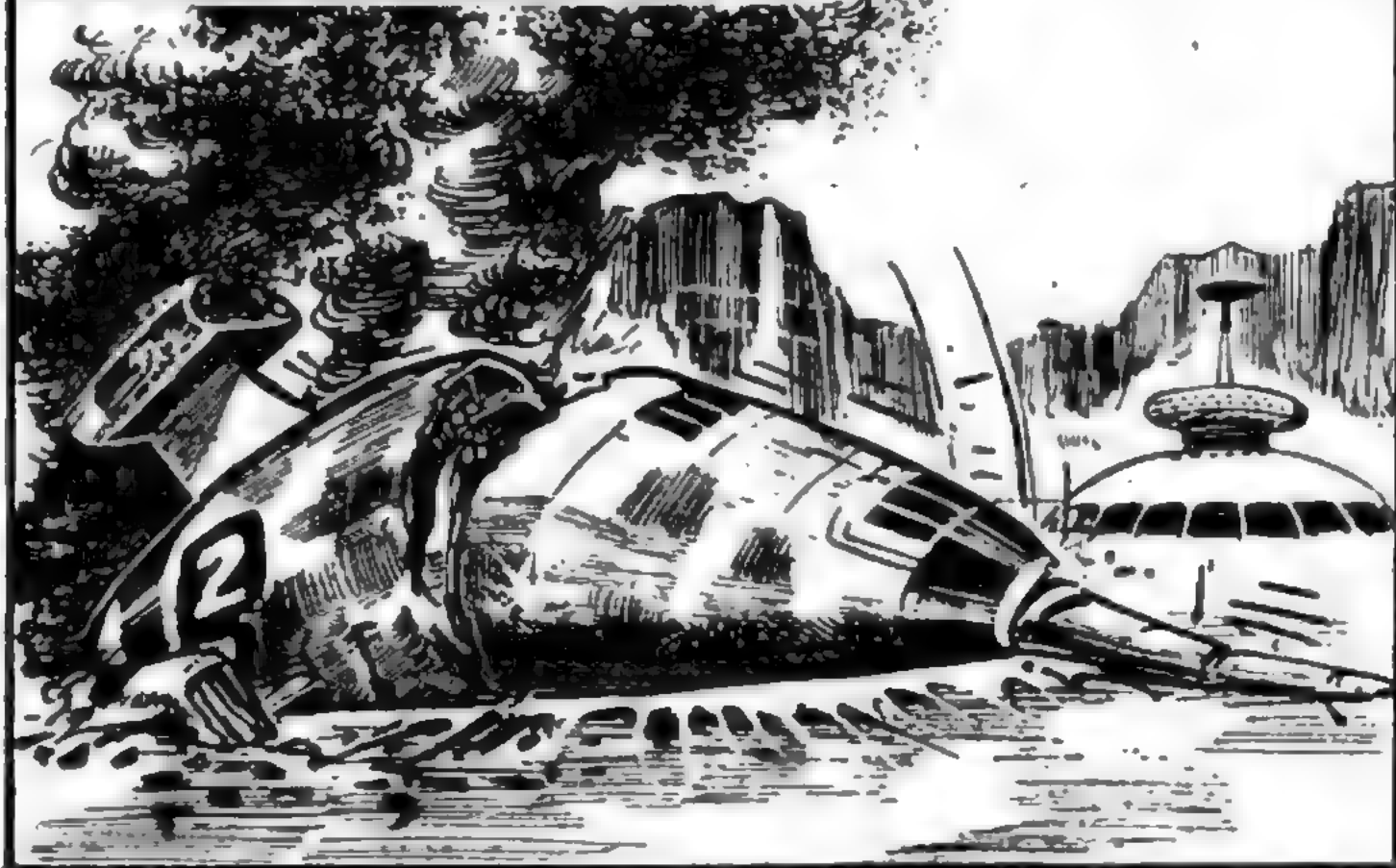
SOMEONE'S ALIVE! THEY'RE COMING OUT TO MEET ME.



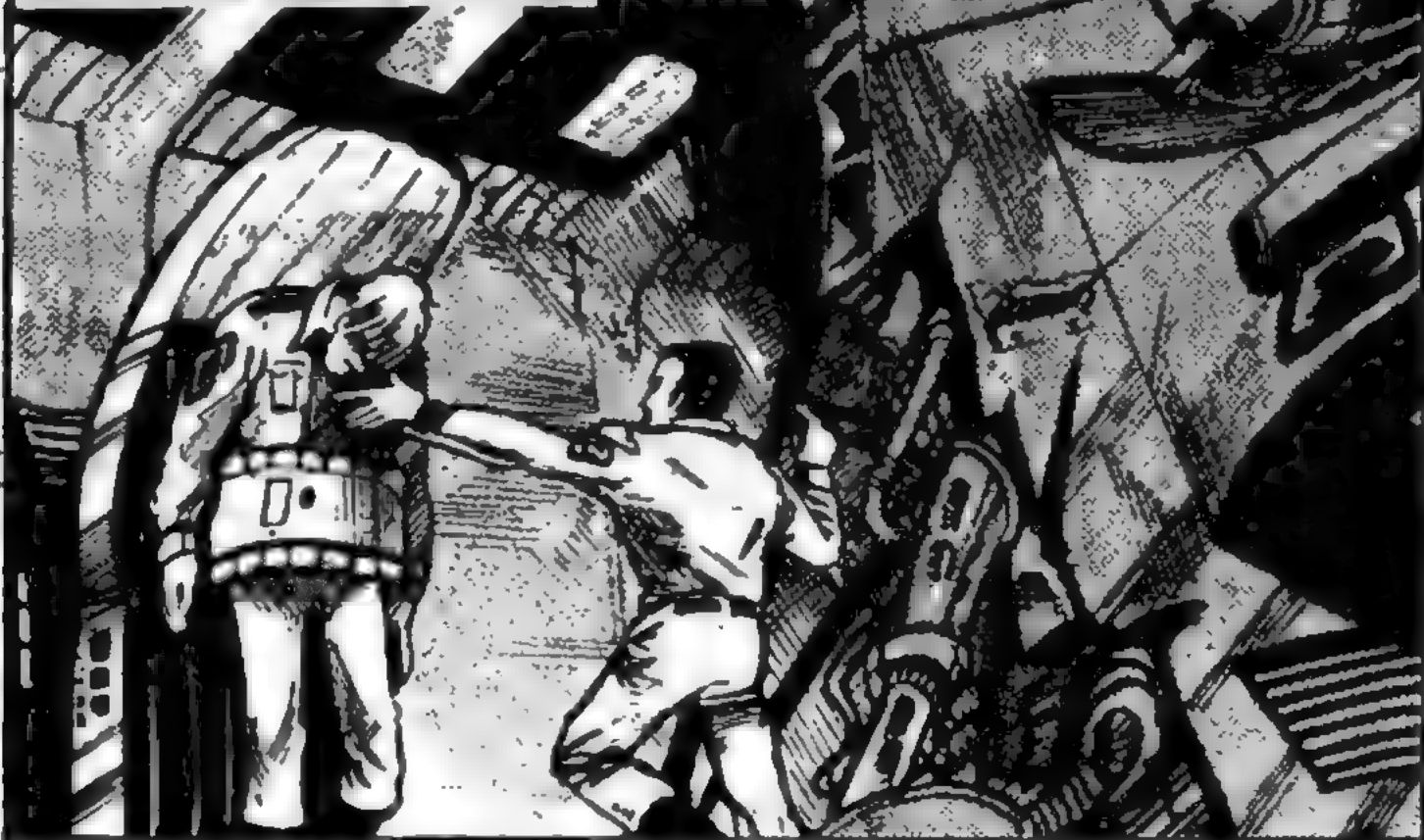
COMP WAS SPOT ON.



THE BUS LURCHED FORWARD BREAKING ITSELF IN HALF.



INSIDE THE SHIP, THE INTERNAL GRAVITY HAD CUSHIONED THE TWO MEN FROM THE WORST OF THE CRASH

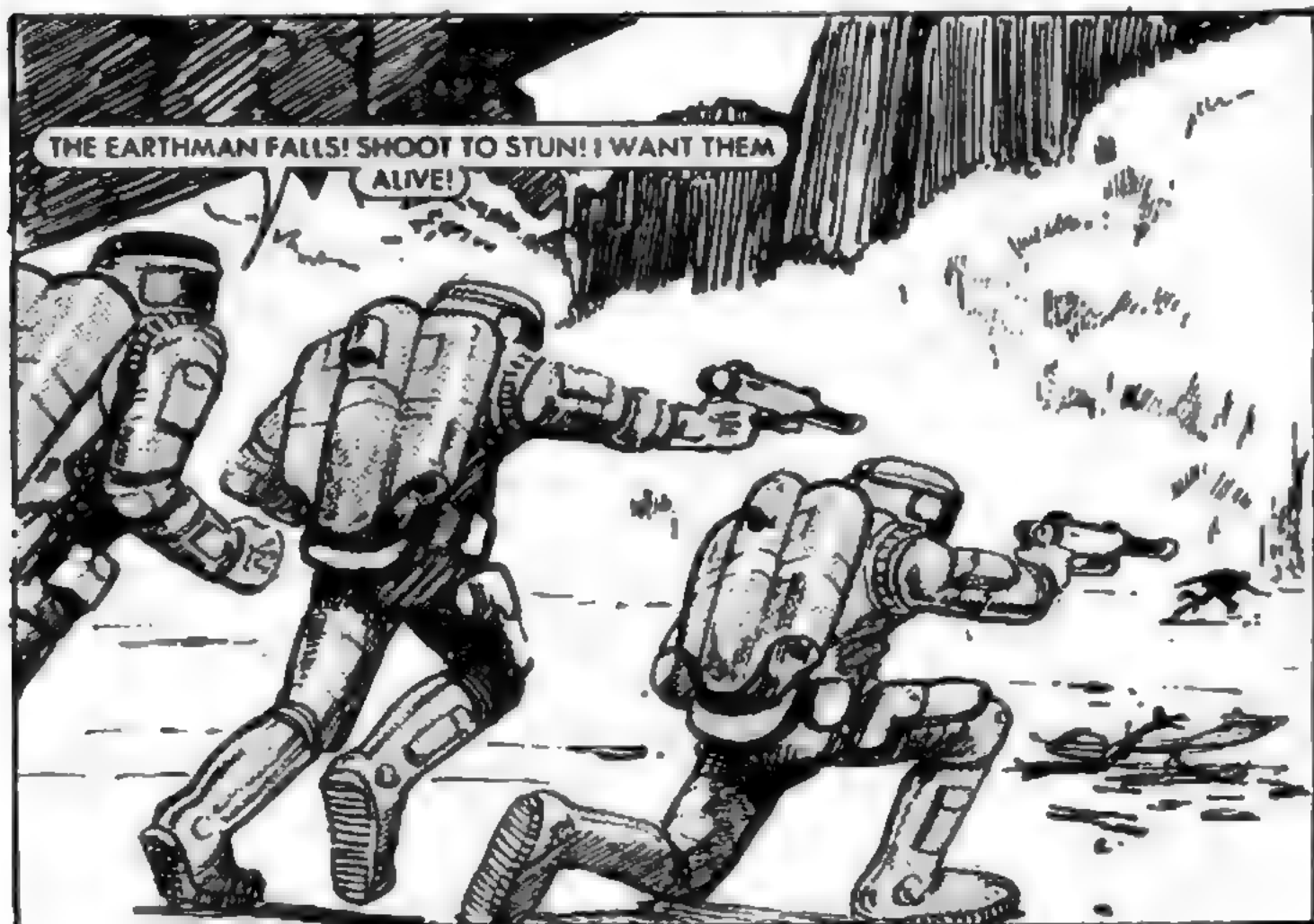


I'LL HAVE TO GET HIM OUT OF HERE BEFORE
THOSE PORGANS COME NOSING AROUND

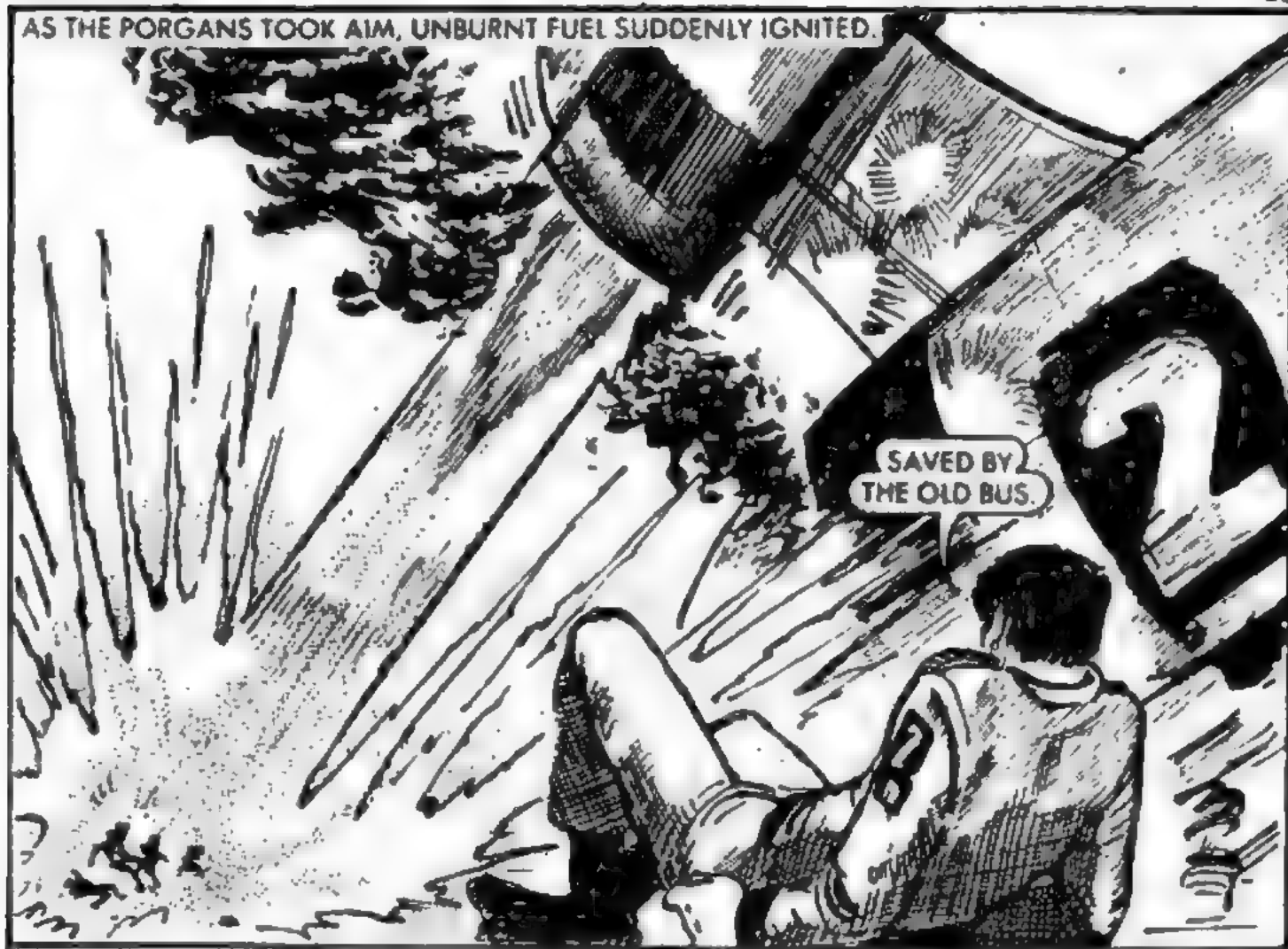


THEY'VE SPOTTED US!





AS THE PORGANS TOOK AIM, UNBURNT FUEL SUDDENLY IGNITED.



SAVED BY
THE OLD BUS.



BETTER PUT SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN US BEFORE
THEY SEND MORE TROOPS AFTER US!

SHAW STUMBLED INTO THE JUNGLE WITH HIS UNCONSCIOUS BURDEN, DESPERATE TO GET AS FAR FROM THE STATION AS POSSIBLE.



BUT SHAW TIRED RAPIDLY.



MINUTES LATER HE WAS ROUSED BY THE BETA 3 CONTROLLER

WAKE UP! WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING? WHERE ARE WE?

SHAW EXPLAINED . . .

... YOUR FRIEND DIED BEAMING IN. A PORGAN SUICIDE SQUAD RISKED BEAMING AFTER YOU. THEY CONTROL BETA 2. AND NOW THEY'VE WIPED OUT ALL THE BETA STATIONS.

AS SOON AS CONDITIONS ARE FAVOURABLE, THEY'LL BLITZ INTO CROSSROADS STATION. THEN THEY'LL MOVE IN WITH THEIR NEUTRON BOMBS AND WAR GERMS AND HOLD THE GALAXY TO RANSOM! IF WE CAN'T FIND A WAY TO STOP THEM IT'S A LIFE OF SLAVERY FOR THE WHOLE GALAXY!



HOLD IT! WE'VE GOT COMPANY—

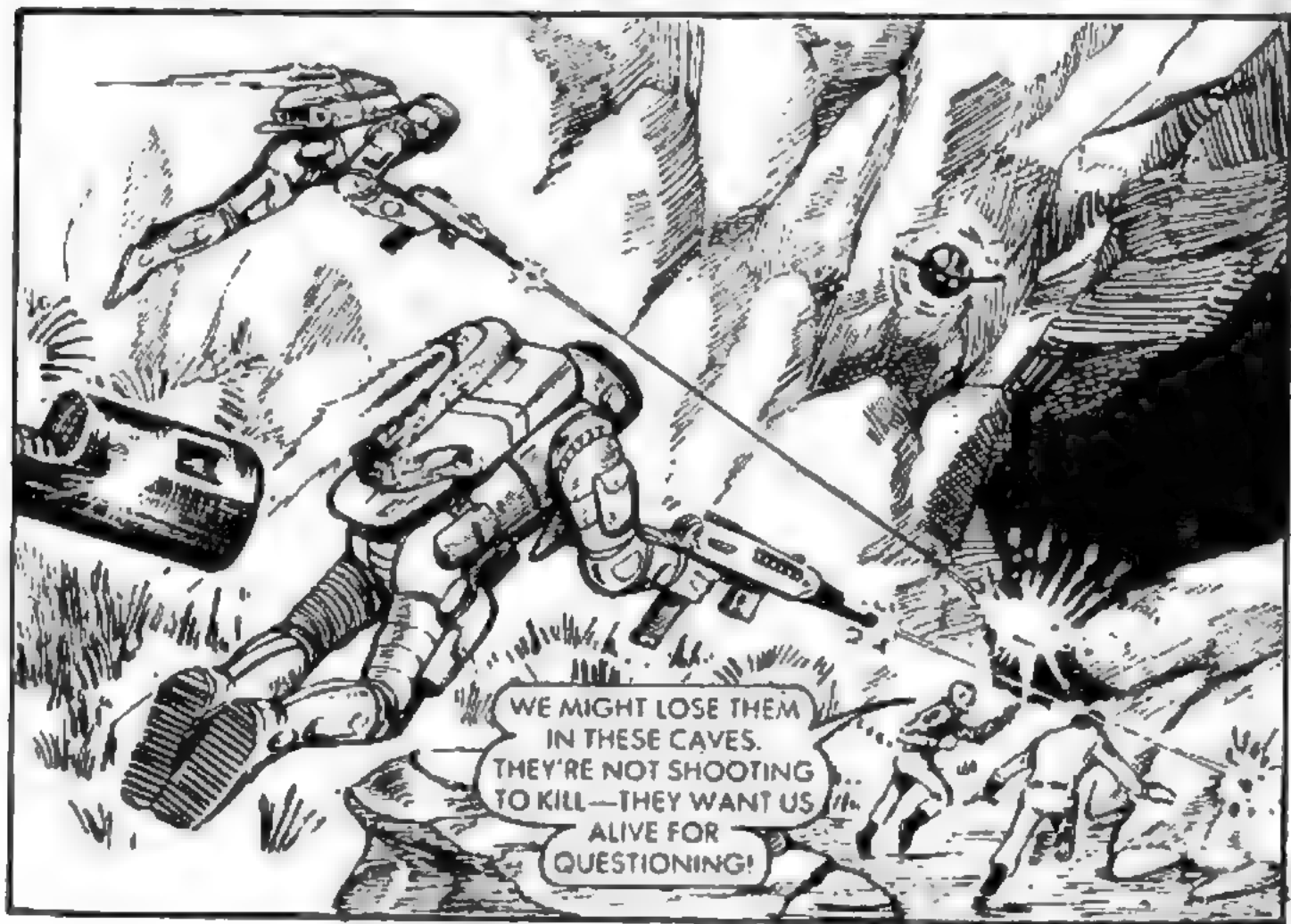
LOOK!

IT'S A PORGAN ROBO-TRACKER!



THAT MEANS IT'S IN TOUCH WITH A
SQUAD OF COMBAT TROOPS. FEEL
UP TO RUNNING, TARG?

YEAH, BUT IT
WON'T DO US MUCH GOOD.





THEY PLUNGED INTO A SMALL SIDE TUNNEL
FOLLOWED BY THE EVER WATCHFUL 'SNIFFER'.

AND HERE'S MINE! NOW KEEP THAT
SNIFFER BUSY SO IT CAN'T SEE
WHAT I'M UP TO. SLING A FEW
ROCKS AT IT.

THIS SHOULD DO FINE. GIVE ME
YOUR WRIST VIS-PHONE.

SHAW MADE SOME ADJUSTMENTS TO THE VIS-PHONE COMMUNICATORS.

SHAW ATTACHED THE SETS AND INSTANTLY THEY BEGAN TO EMIT A NERVE-TORTURING BLAST OF ULTRA-SONIC VIBRATIONS.

YOU SET THEM TO RECEIVE AND TRANSMIT SIMULTANEOUSLY!

THE VIBRATIONS'LL KEEP ON BUILDING UP—BOUNCING FROM WALL TO WALL. THE MORE THEY HEAR THE MORE THEY'LL EMIT—IT'LL CONFUSE THE SNIFFER!

IT'S DOING MORE THAN THAT. IT'S BEGINNING TO SET UP SYMPATHETIC VIBRATIONS INSIDE ITS FORCE-FIELD. IT'S GOING MAD!

GET DOWN! IT'S GOING TO BLOW UP!

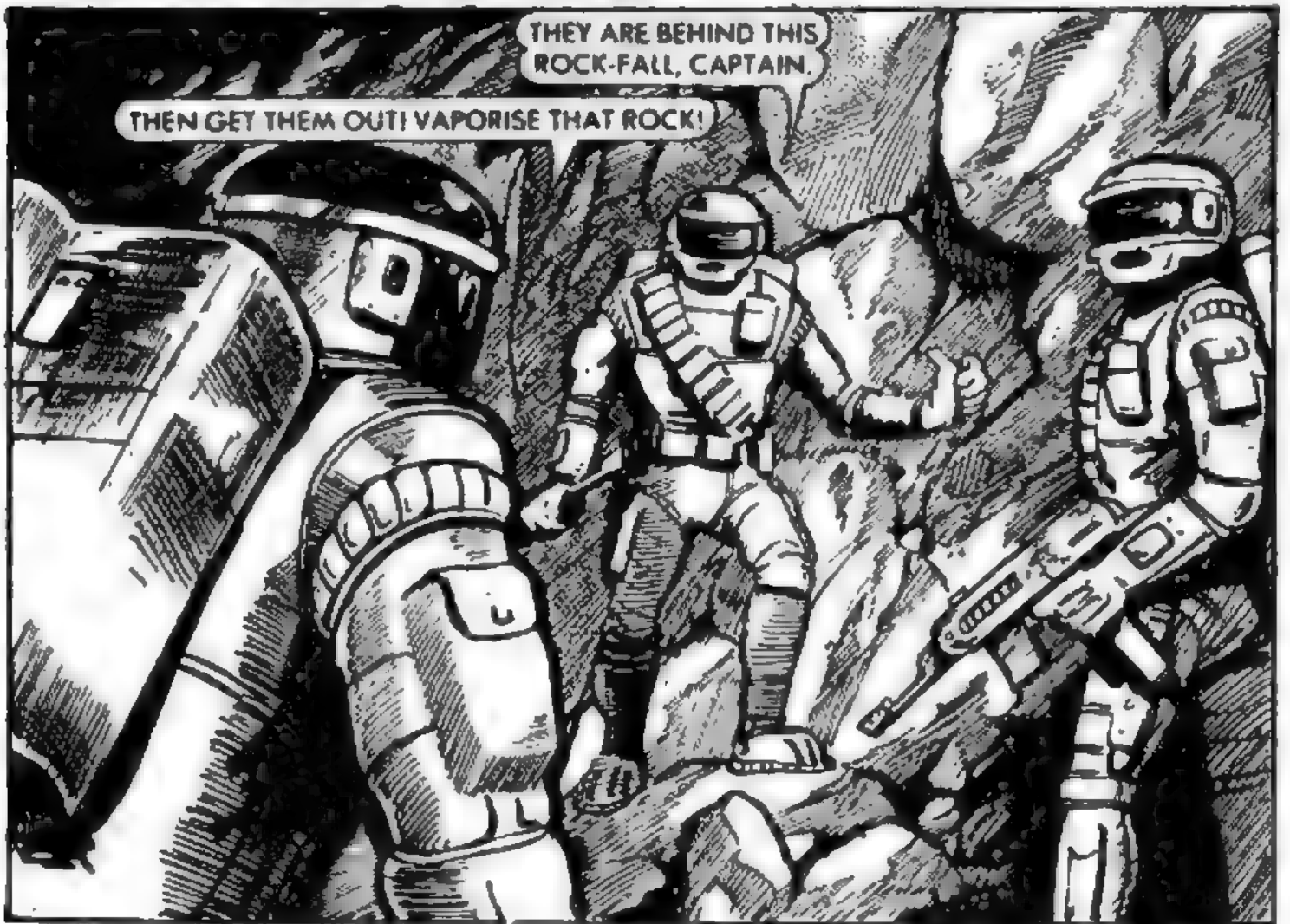
THE BUILD-UP OF ENERGY INSIDE THE FORCE-FIELD GREW TOO HUGE TO BE CONTAINED—AND THE 'SNIFFER' DISINTEGRATED.



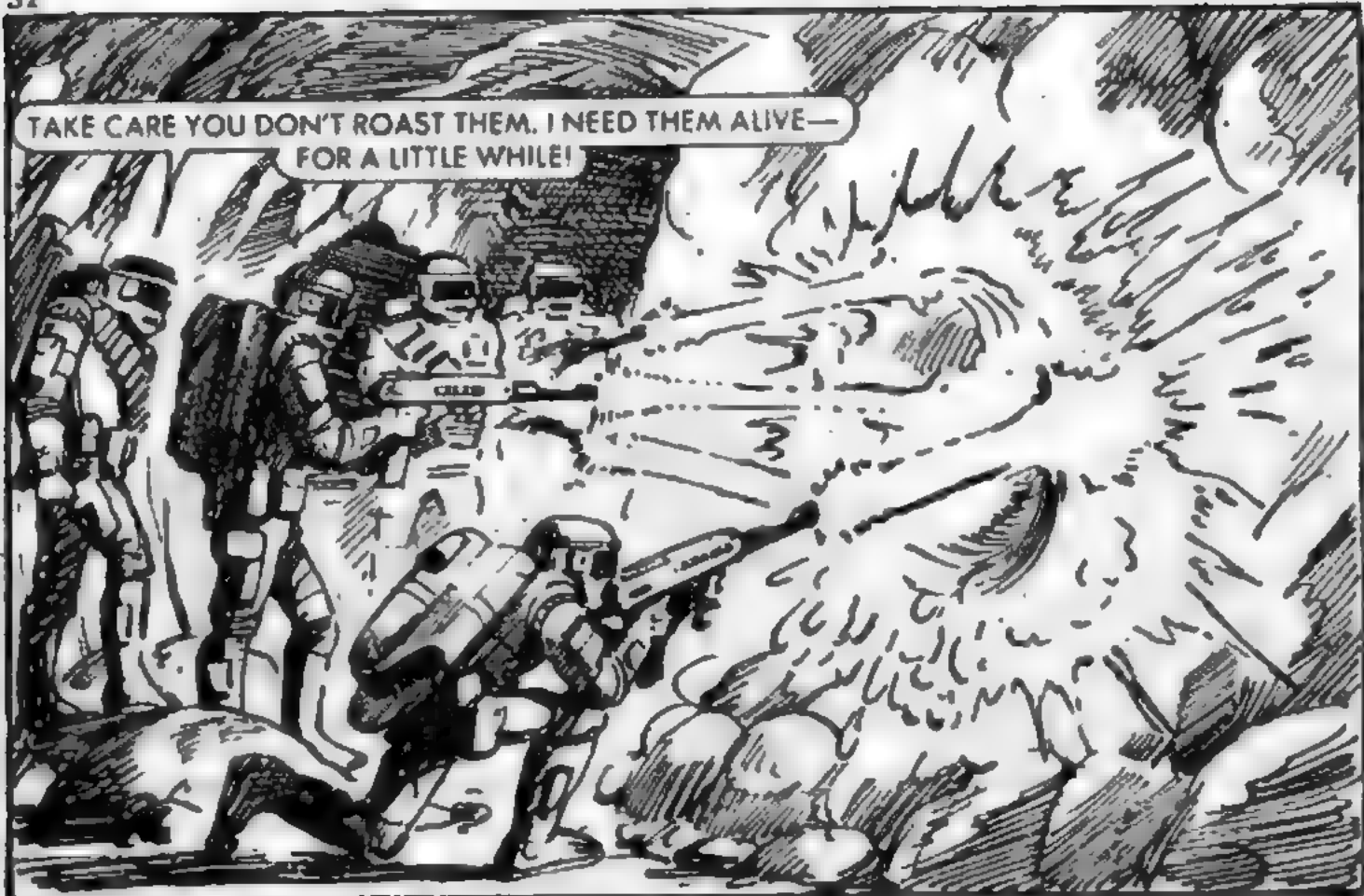
THE ROOF'S FALLING IN...

THEY ARE BEHIND THIS
ROCK-FALL, CAPTAIN.

THEN GET THEM OUT! VAPORISE THAT ROCK!



TAKE CARE YOU DON'T ROAST THEM. I NEED THEM ALIVE—
FOR A LITTLE WHILE!



WITHIN MINUTES THE PORGANS HAD VAPORISED A TUNNEL THROUGH TO THE SPACERS.

THEY ARE ALIVE, CAPTAIN, JUST
CONCUSSED FROM THE BLAST.





YOU WILL TELL THE CAPTAIN WHAT HE WANTS TO KNOW.

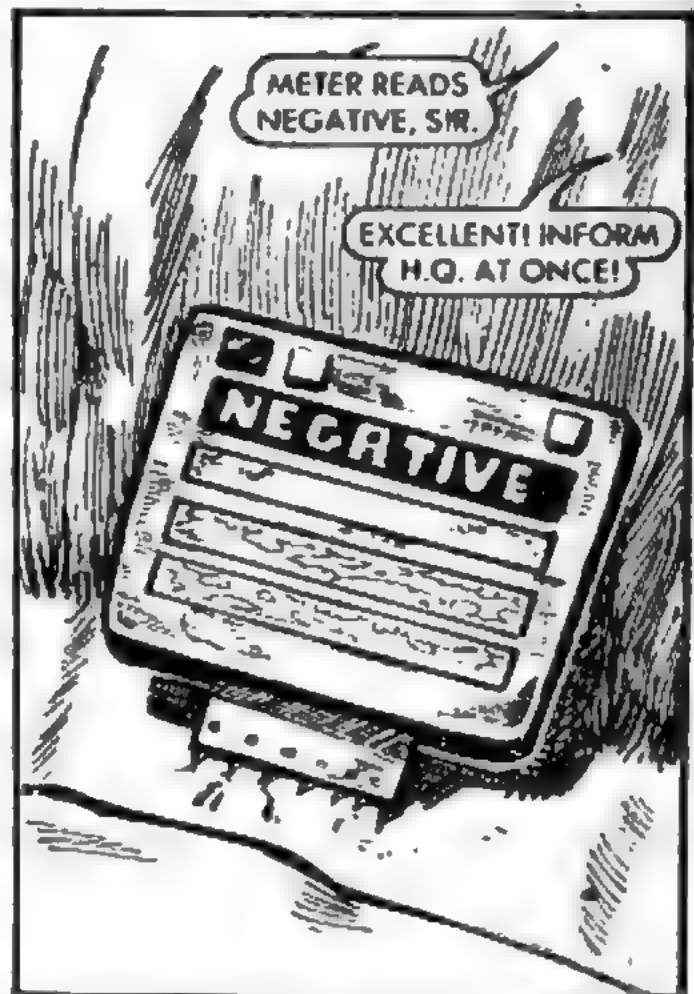
GET ROTTED, PORGAN!

VERY WELL, INJECT HIM WITH A TRUTH METER, CORPORAL.



A TRUTH METER WAS INSERTED IN HIS NECK.

DOES CROSSROADS CENTRAL KNOW OF OUR INVASION PLAN?



METER READS NEGATIVE, SIR.

EXCELLENT! INFORM H.Q. AT ONCE!

NEGATIVE





SHAW AND TARG WERE RETURNED TO THE TUNNEL. THE PORGAN CAPTAIN RAISED HIS BLAST GUN.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO US, PORGAN?

NOTHING! I'M JUST GOING TO CLOSE THE LID ON THIS COFFIN I'VE BUILT FOR YOU! YOU SHOULD BE DEAD IN ABOUT THREE WEEKS! HAPPY STARVING!

HE FIRED AND THE ROOF COLLAPSED SEALING THE SPACERS IN THEIR TOMB.

HA! HA! THE POOR PORGAN!

HAVE YOU GONE MAD? WE'RE GOING TO DIE OF THIRST! THIS TUNNEL'S SEALED AT BOTH ENDS!



HOURS LATER THEY CREPT TO,
FREEDOM.

NOW LET'S GET BACK
TO THE BASE AND SEE IF
WE CAN DO A SPOT OF
SABOTAGE.

IT WAS NEARLY DUSK WHEN THEY SIGHTED THE RELAY --
STORAGE STATION.

JUST LOOK AT THE TROOPS AND
STUFF THEY'VE MOVED IN. JUST
HOW DO WE STOP THAT?

WE'LL HAVE TO FIND A WAY.
IN TWELVE HOURS THEY'LL BE
ABLE TO BUTZ IT ALL IN TO
CROSSROADS!

THEY CREEPT DOWN TO THE STORAGE PERIMETER.



THERE'S NO ONE ABOUT. LET'S MAKE A DASH FOR THOSE MACHINES.

HOLD IT!

SHAW THREW A HANDFUL OF STONES AND INSTANTLY THEY EXPLODED.



A COMPUTER-DIRECTED LASER SYSTEM. IT'S ABOUT FIVE METRES HIGH.

THEN WE CAN'T GET PAST IT.

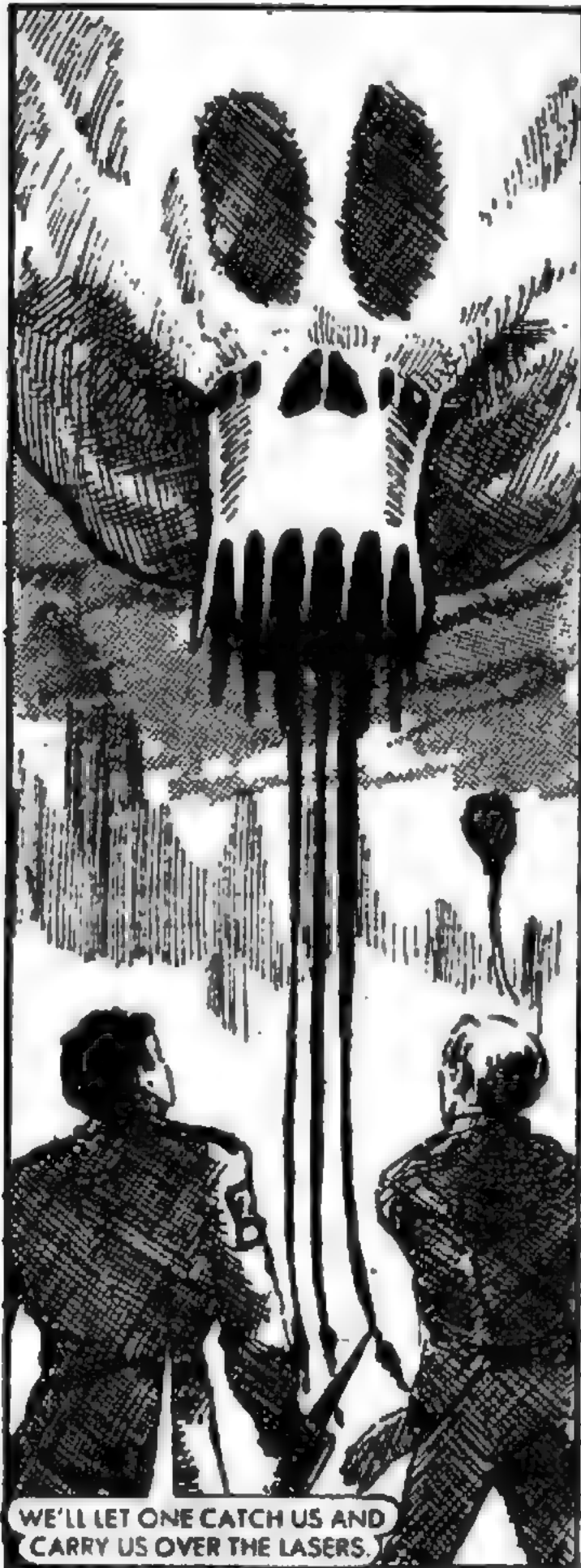
THERE IS A WAY. WE COULD
USE DRIFTERS—Y'KNOW,
THOSE FLOATING PLANTS.

YEAH... PRETTY DEADLY,
AREN'T THEY?

AS THEY RETURNED TO THE JUNGLE
A SWARM OF HUGE CREATURES
FLOATED TOWARDS THEM ON THE
EVENING WIND.

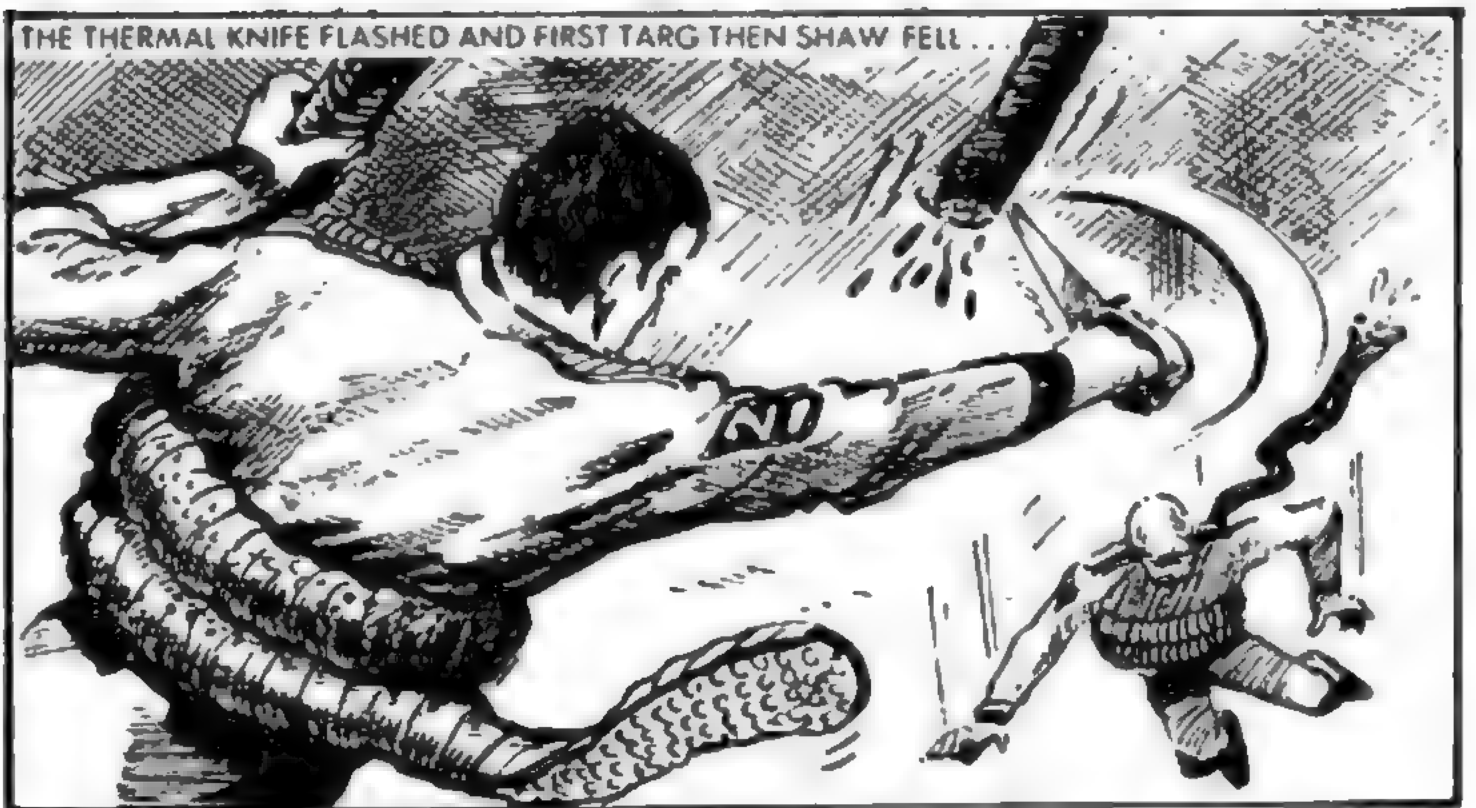
THEY'RE VERY PRIMITIVE CREATURES.
FLOATING JELLYFISH! THEY DRIFT ALONG
ON THE NIGHT WINDS CATCHING FOOD
WITH THOSE TRAILING TENDRILS.



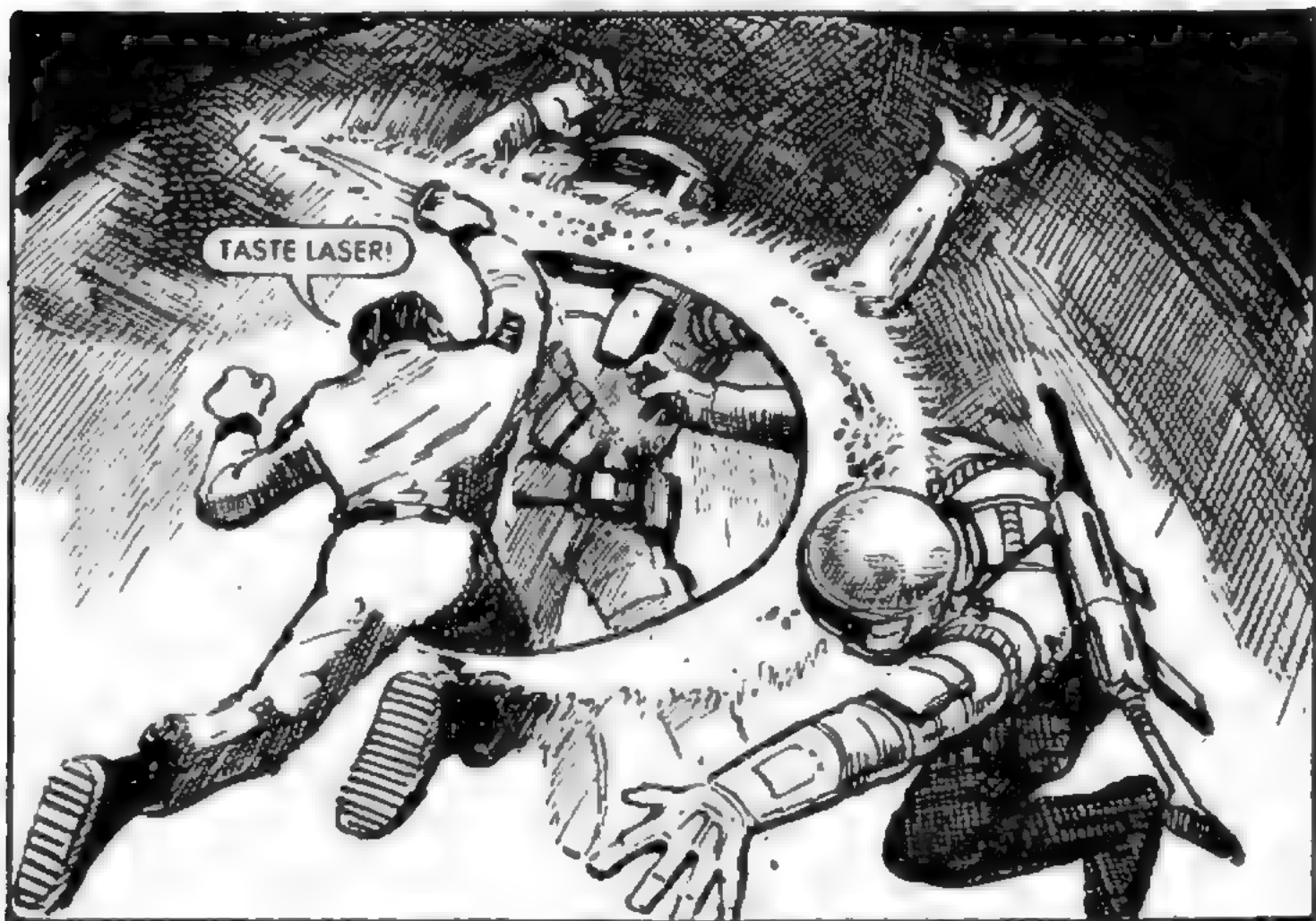


SECONDS LATER THEY STEPPED INTO A
DRIFTER'S TENDRILS.





... RIGHT BESIDE A PAIR OF DOZING PORGAN SOLDIERS!



THEY SEARCHED THE PORGANS FOR WEAPONS...

THIS IS THE ONLY GUN THEY HAD. IT'S NOT
MUCH TO MAKE WAR ON THE PORGAN
EMPIRE WITH, SHAW!

YEAH, WE NEED A BIT MORE
MUSCLE.



THE CANNON ON THAT GUN BARGE IS ABOUT RIGHT TO DO
THE JOB!

THERE'S NO POINT IN WRECKING
THE BASE DOWN HERE IF THE SPACE-
STATION IS STILL FUNCTIONING.

THEY'RE BOUND TO HAVE
MASSIVE RESERVES READY TO
BEAM IN.

IT'S THE SPACE-STATION WE'VE GOT
TO KNOCK OUT, AND I'VE A PLAN
TO GET UP THERE.

THERE'S MY WRECKED SPACESHIP AROUND
HERE SOMEWHERE. WE'LL FIND IT.

IT WAS EASY TO DETECT



THE SPACERS CLIMBED THROUGH THE WRECKAGE UNTIL THEY REACHED A STORE ROOM.



THEY DRESSED AND CARRIED A SPARE ANTI-GRAVITY UNIT OUT TO THE GUN-BARGE



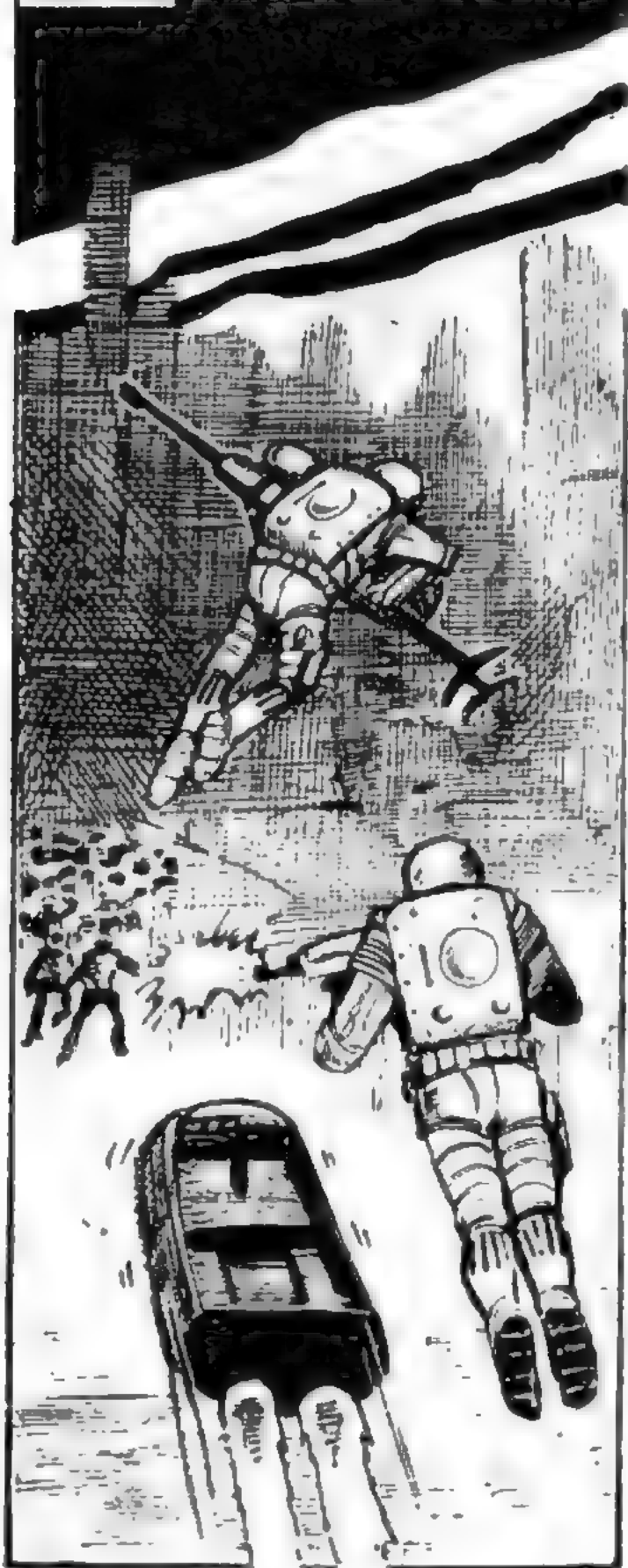
FIX THAT UNIT TO THE CANNON,
SHAW—WE'VE GOT COMPANY!



LIFT OFF, TARG! LET'S GO!

SABOTEURS! KILL THEM!

SHAW ACTIVATED THE ANTI-GRAVITY UNIT AND KICKED THE THROTTLE OF THE GUN-BARGE. IT BLASTED TOWARDS THE PORGAN TROOPERS



WHILE THEY'RE SORTING THEMSELVES OUT WE CAN GAIN SOME ALTITUDE.

WE'LL NEED IT! IT'S GOING TO TAKE HOURS TO REACH FREE SPACE.

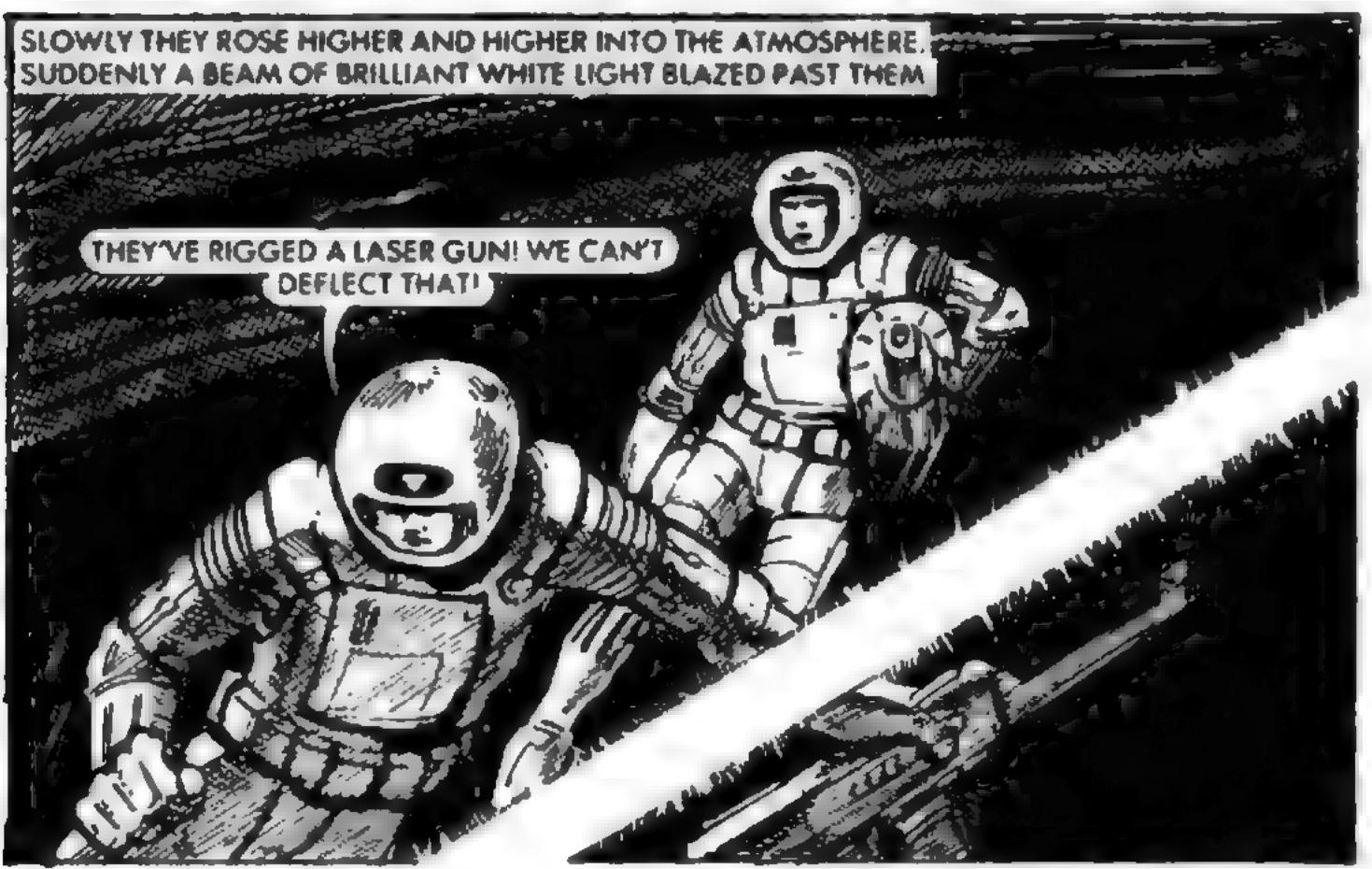


THEY'LL BE AFTER US NOW, BUT AT LEAST THEY CAN'T USE MISSILES TO KNOCK US DOWN. THE ANTI-GRAVITY UNITS WILL DEFLECT THE GUIDANCE SYSTEMS!



SLOWLY THEY ROSE HIGHER AND HIGHER INTO THE ATMOSPHERE. SUDDENLY A BEAM OF BRILLIANT WHITE LIGHT BLAZED PAST THEM

THEY'VE RIGGED A LASER GUN! WE CAN'T DEFLECT THAT!

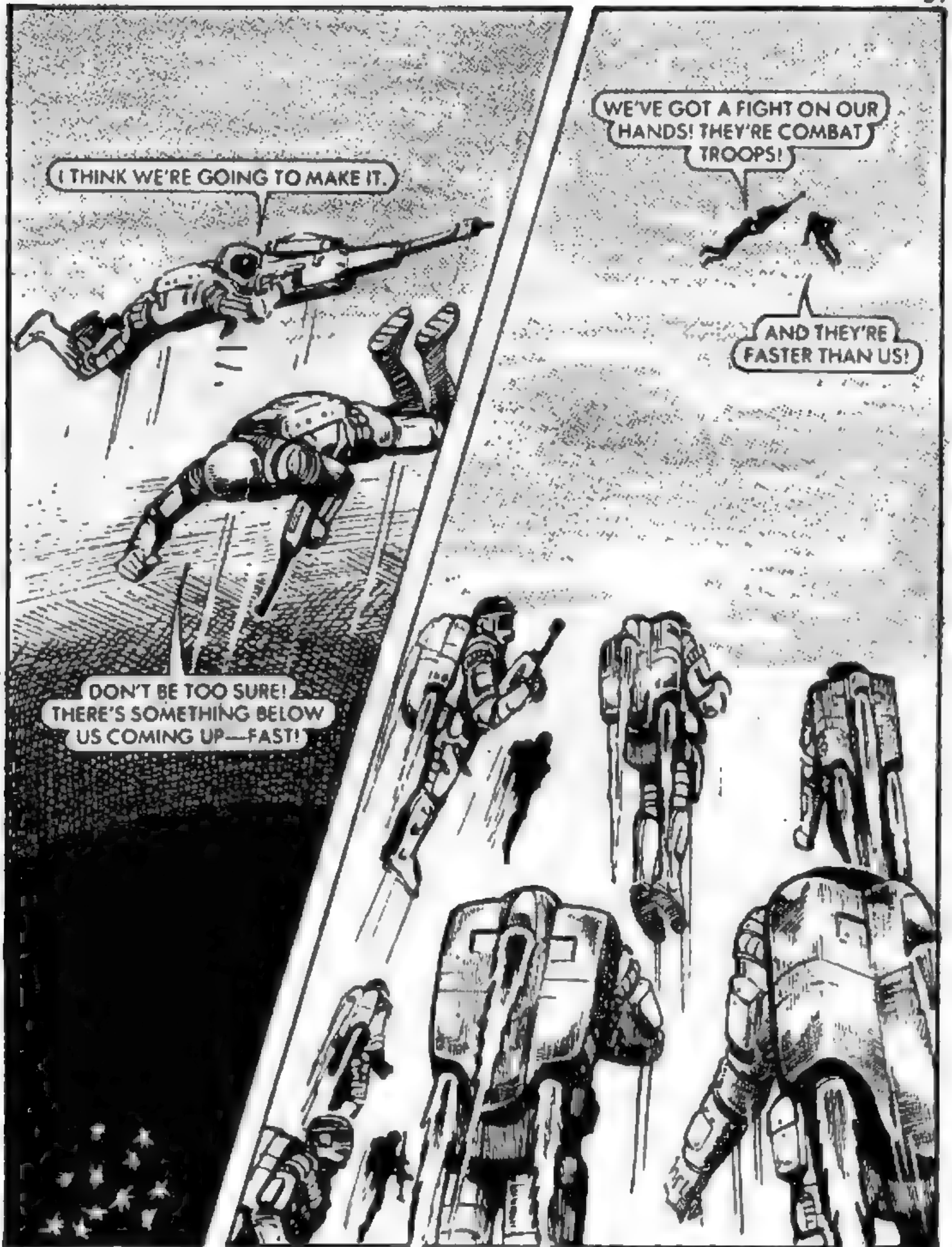


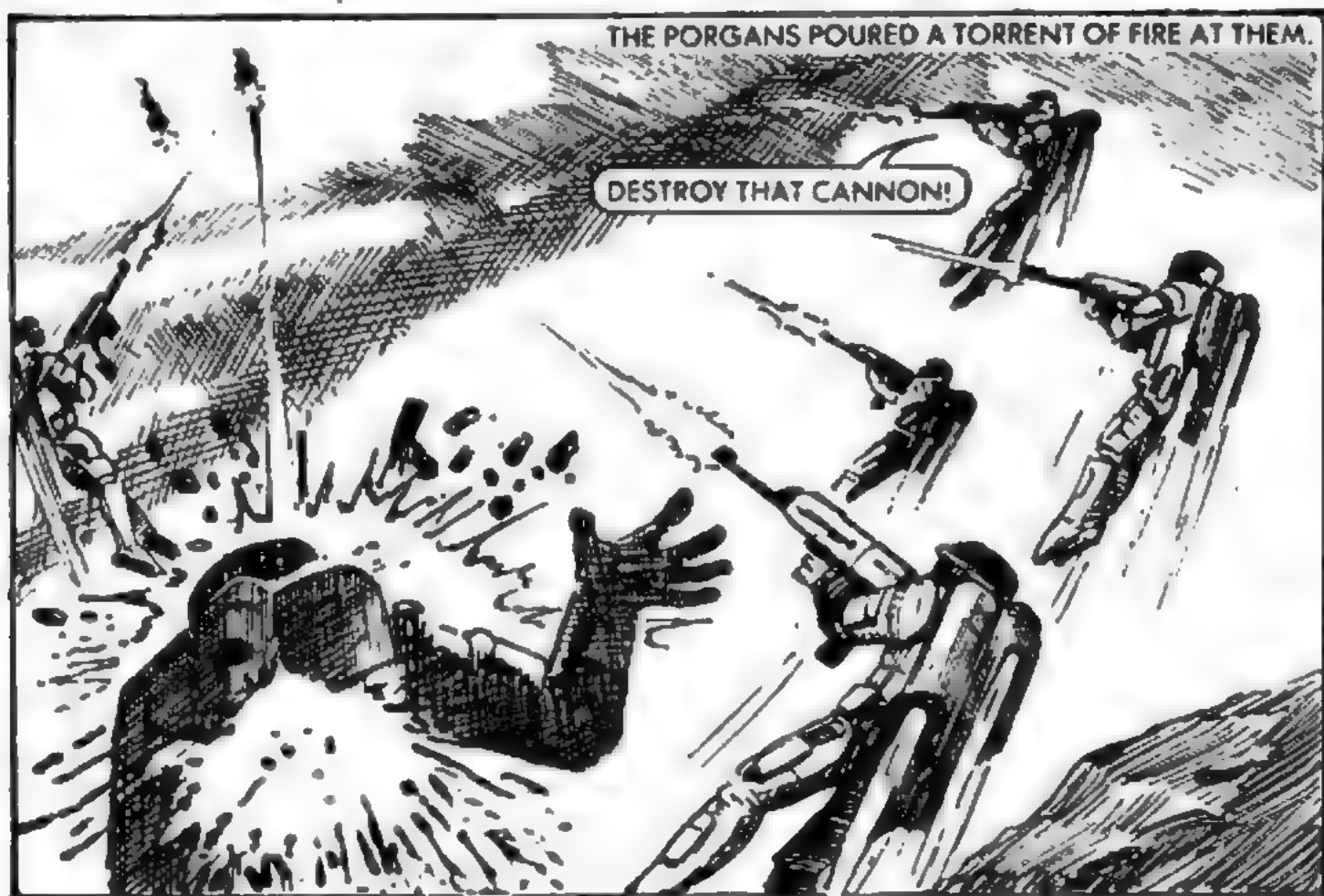
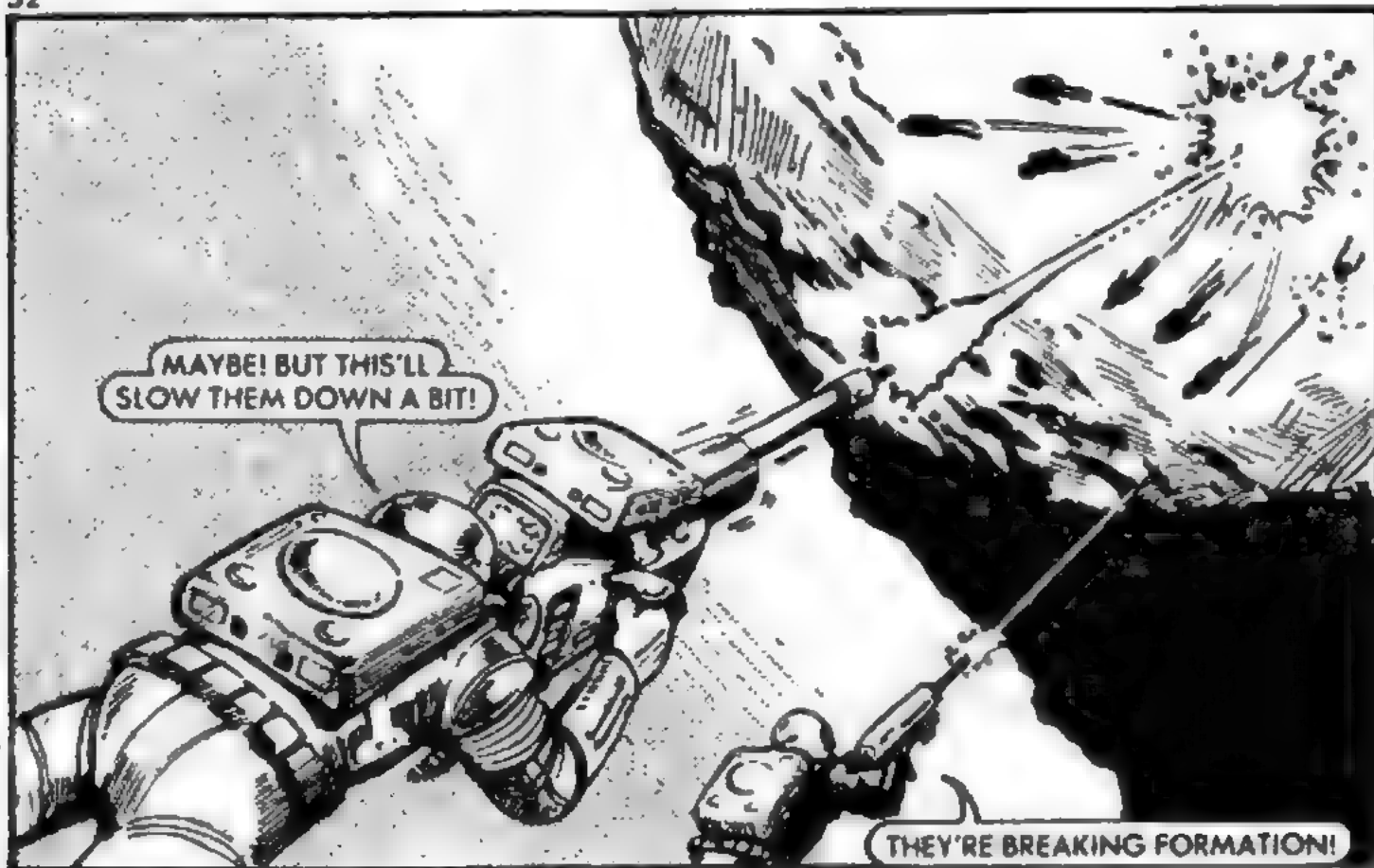
THE BEAM OF WHITE DEATH LICKED THE SKY HUNTING FOR THEM.

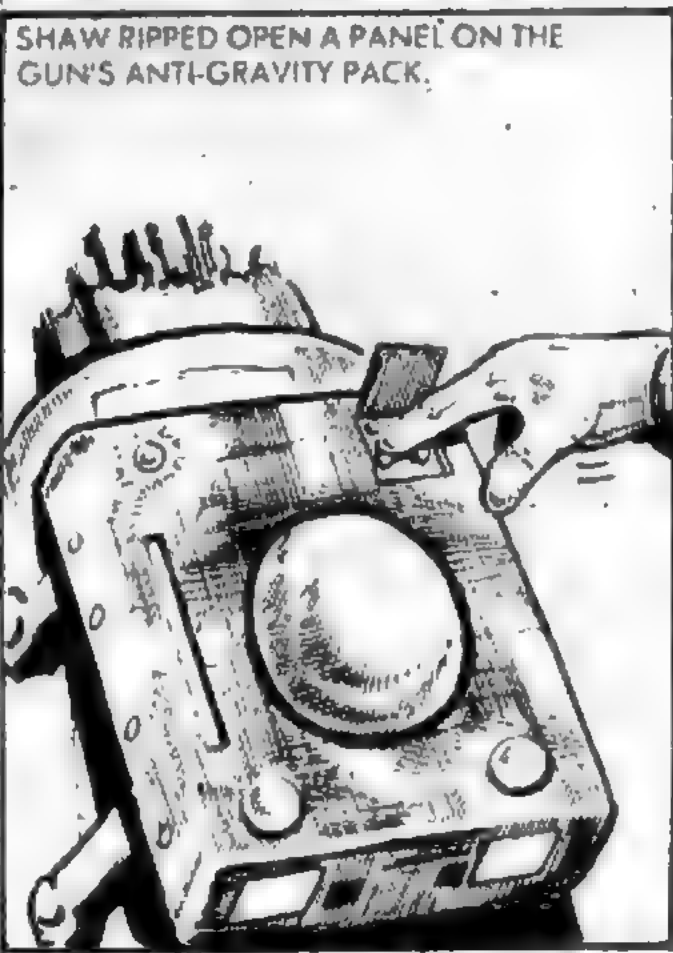
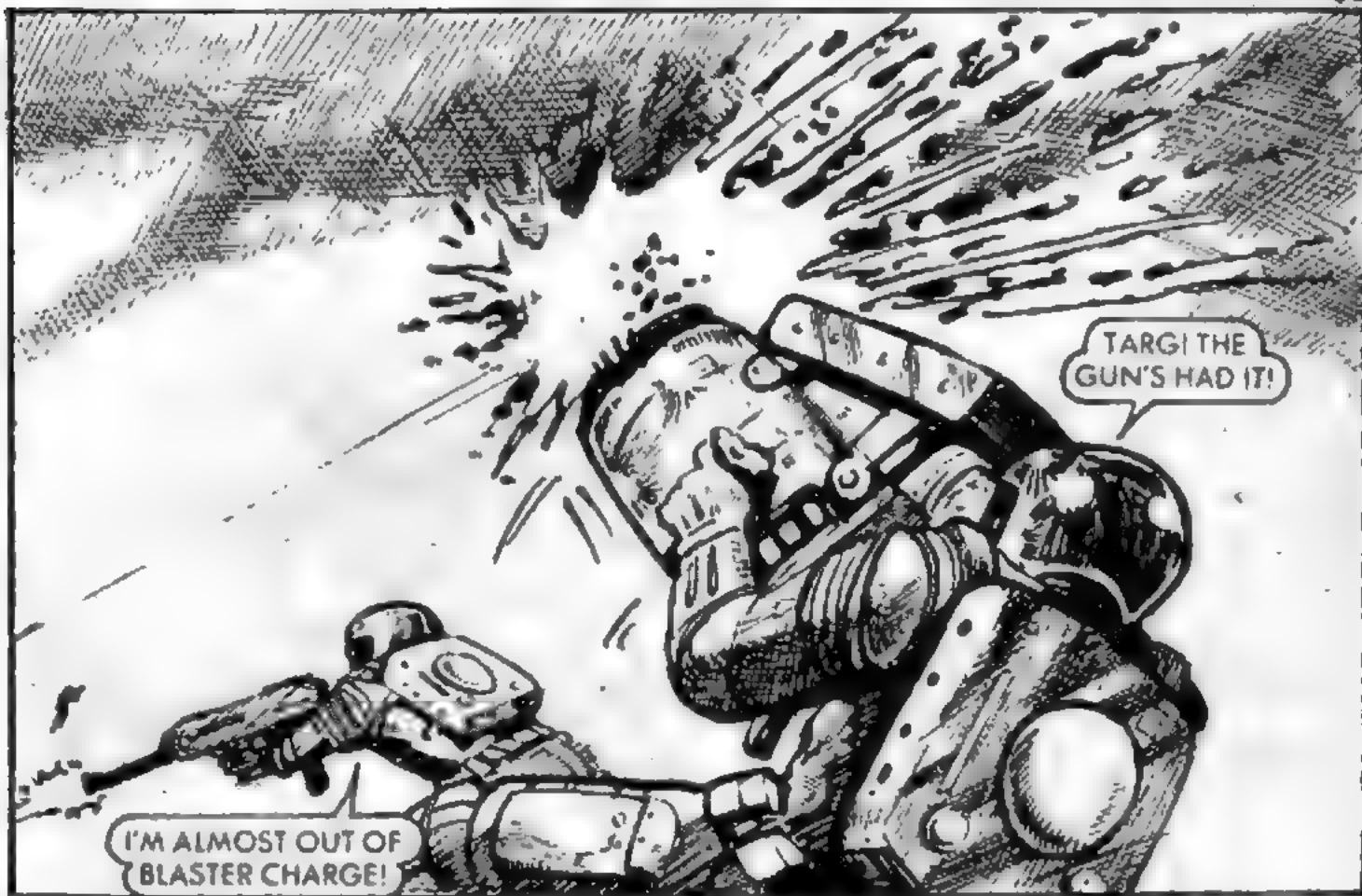
GOT TO BUST IT BEFORE THEY GET
A PROPER FIX ON US!

SHAW'S AIM WAS SPOT ON







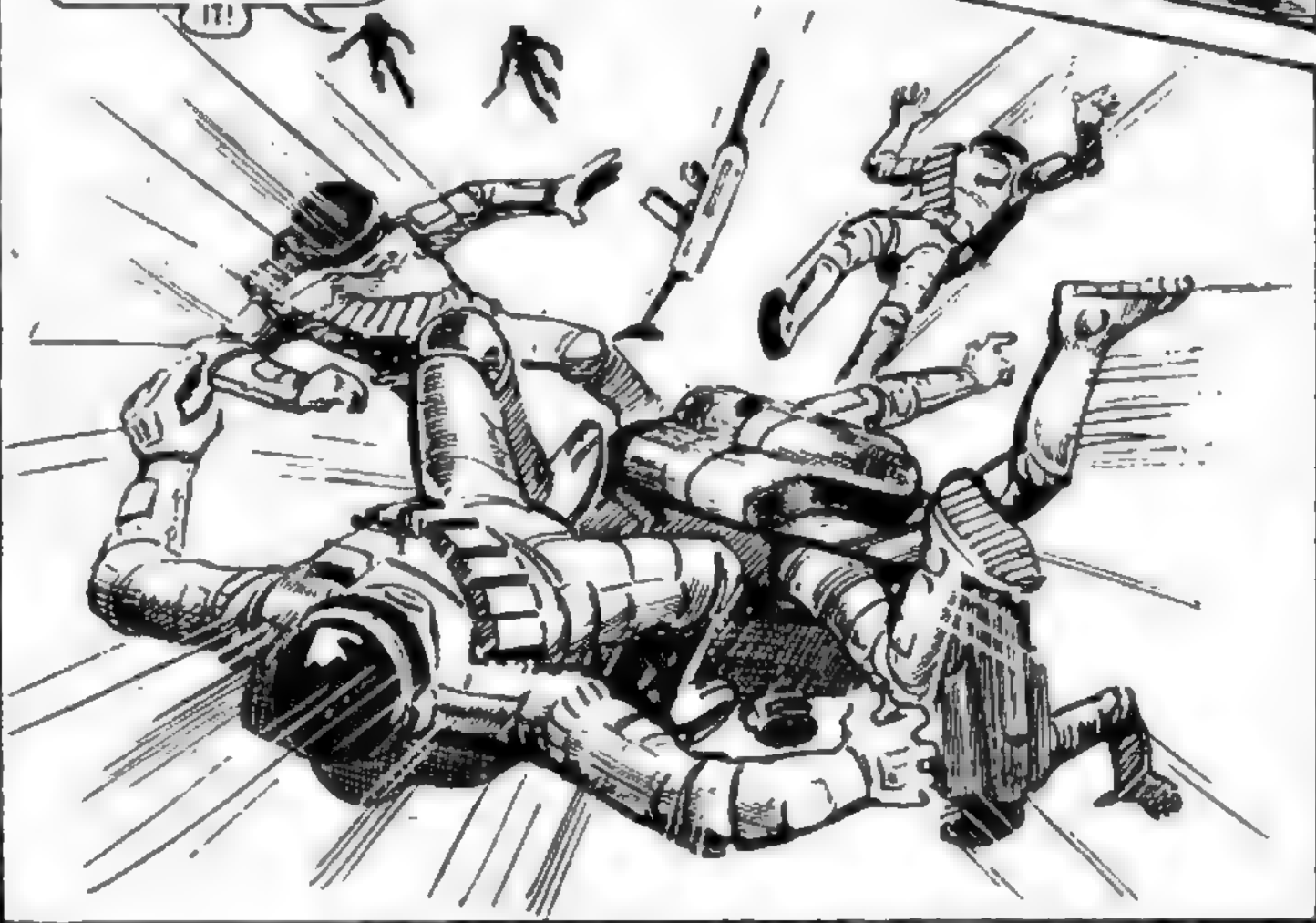


THE UNIT, WITH ITS SHATTERED CANNON, ROCKETED DOWNWARDS.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

I'VE REVERSED THE POLARITY!
INSTEAD OF BEING REPELLED BY
THE PLANET IT'S NOW BEING
ATTRACTED TO IT.

IT ALSO BEHAVES LIKE A
MAGNET PULLING
EVERYTHING TOWARDS
IT!



SUCKED IN BY THE IRRESISTIBLE FORCE OF THE UNIT,
THE PORGANS PLUMMETED.



THAT'S THE END OF THEM. BUT
WE'VE LOST THE CANNON AND
THE BLASTER'S EMPTY.

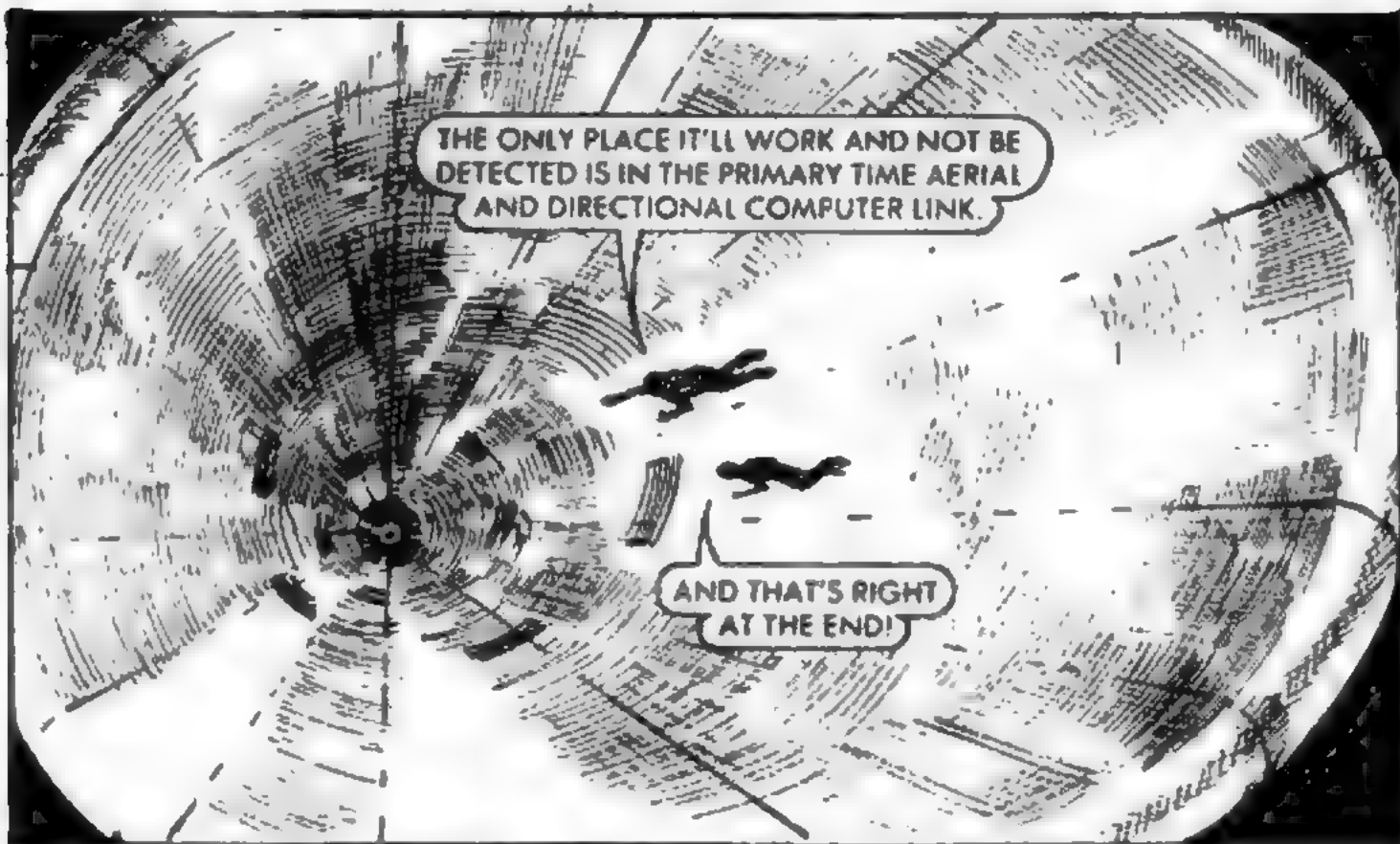
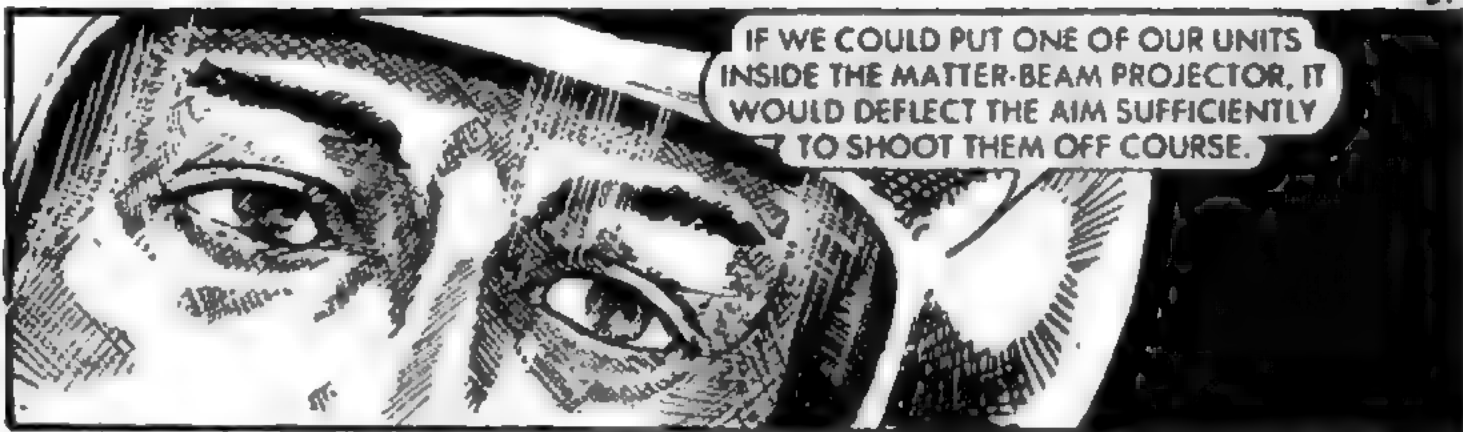


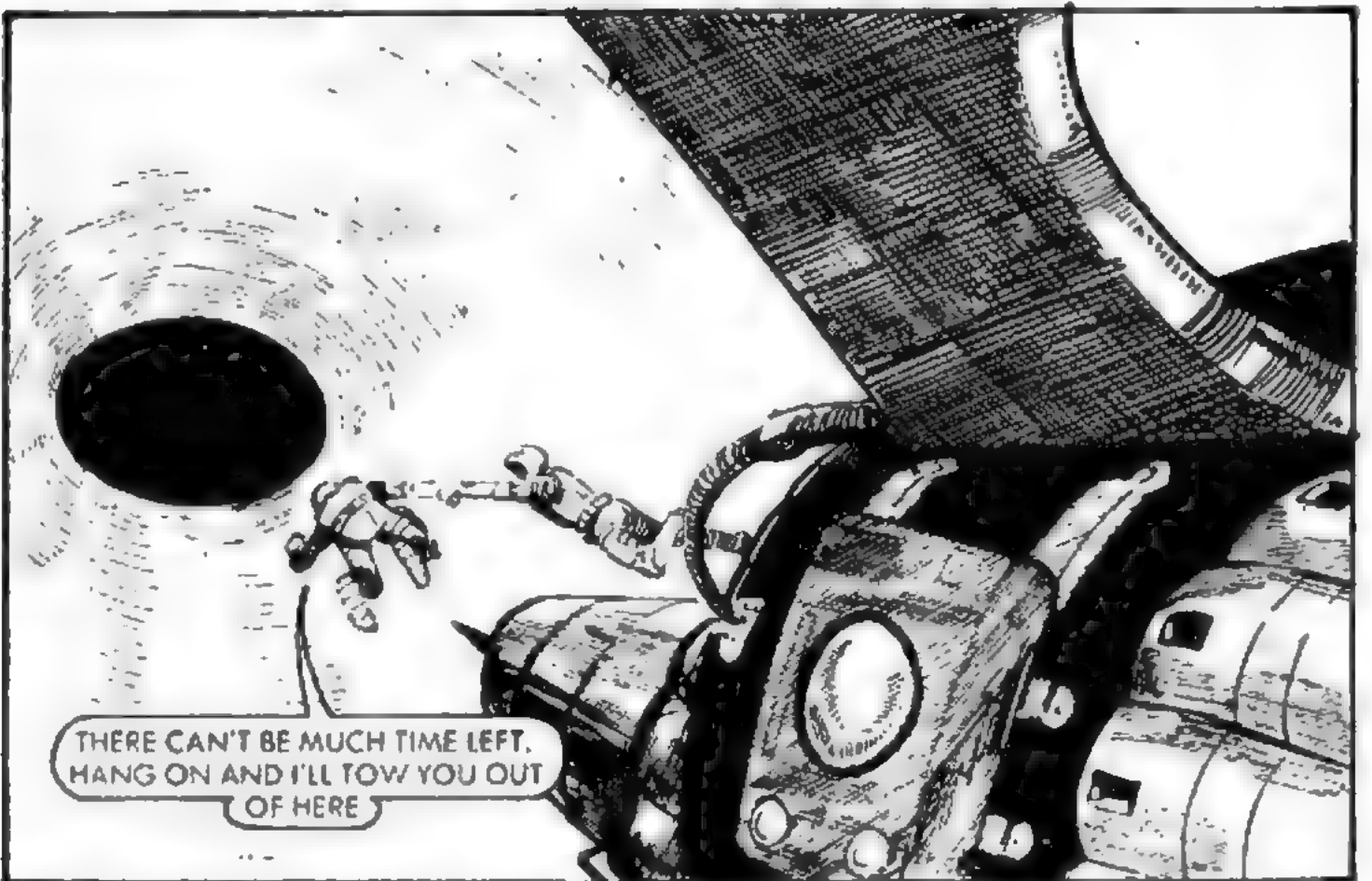
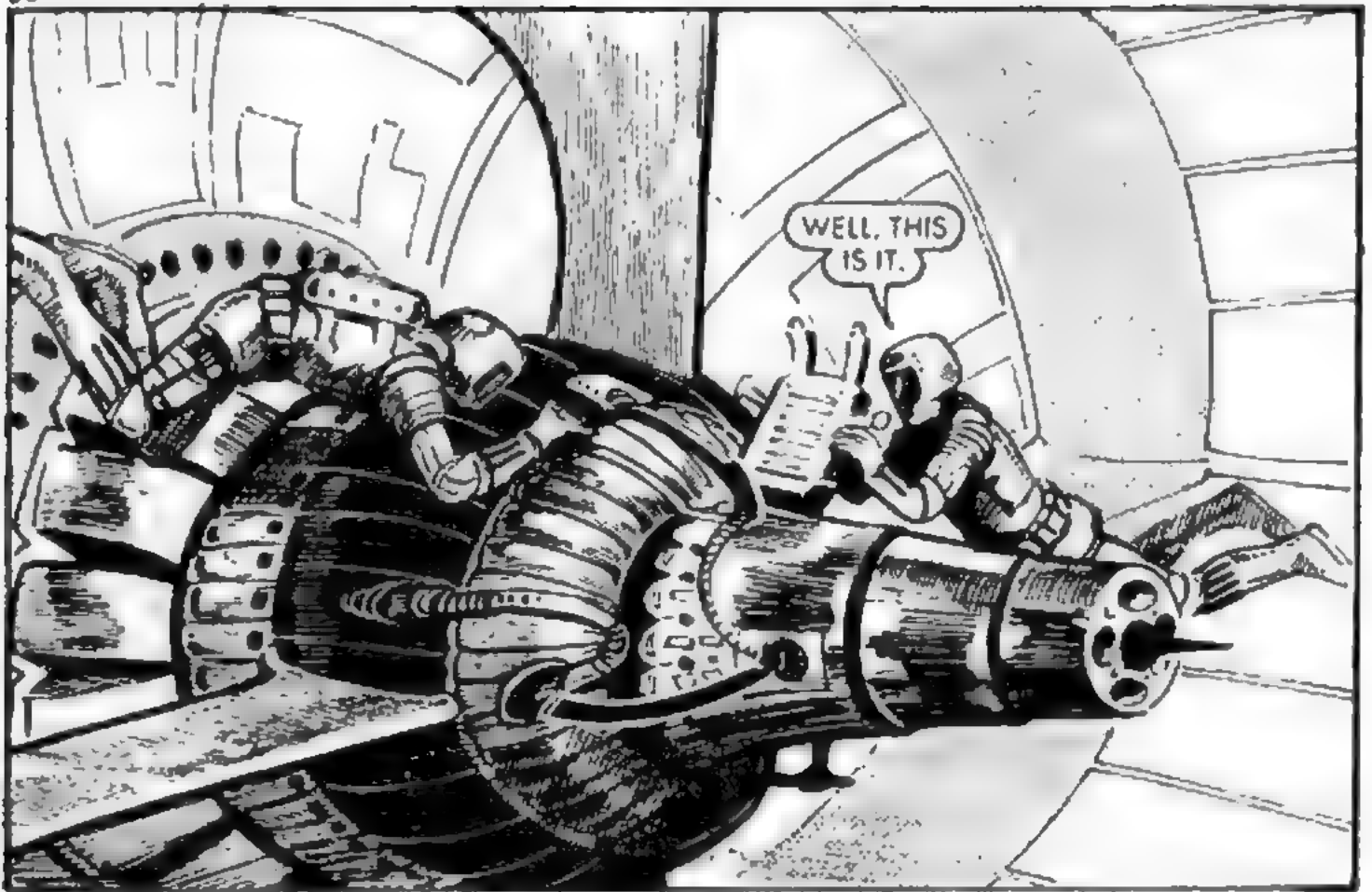
LET'S GET ON UP TO THE
SPACE STATION, THERE'S NOT
MUCH TIME LEFT.

AT LONG LAST THEY CAME IN SIGHT OF THE RELAY STATION

BETTER HAVE A LOOK AT WHAT'S
GOING ON BEFORE WE MOVE IN.







EVEN AS TARG SPOKE THE WALLS AROUND THEM BEGAN TO VIBRATE AND GLOW.

THEY'RE GOING INTO
WARM UP—GET A MOVE ON, SHAW!

I CAN'T! MY UNIT'S FAILING—
THE POWER'S RUNNING OUT!

THEN WE'LL FRY!

WE MIGHT JUST MAKE IT!

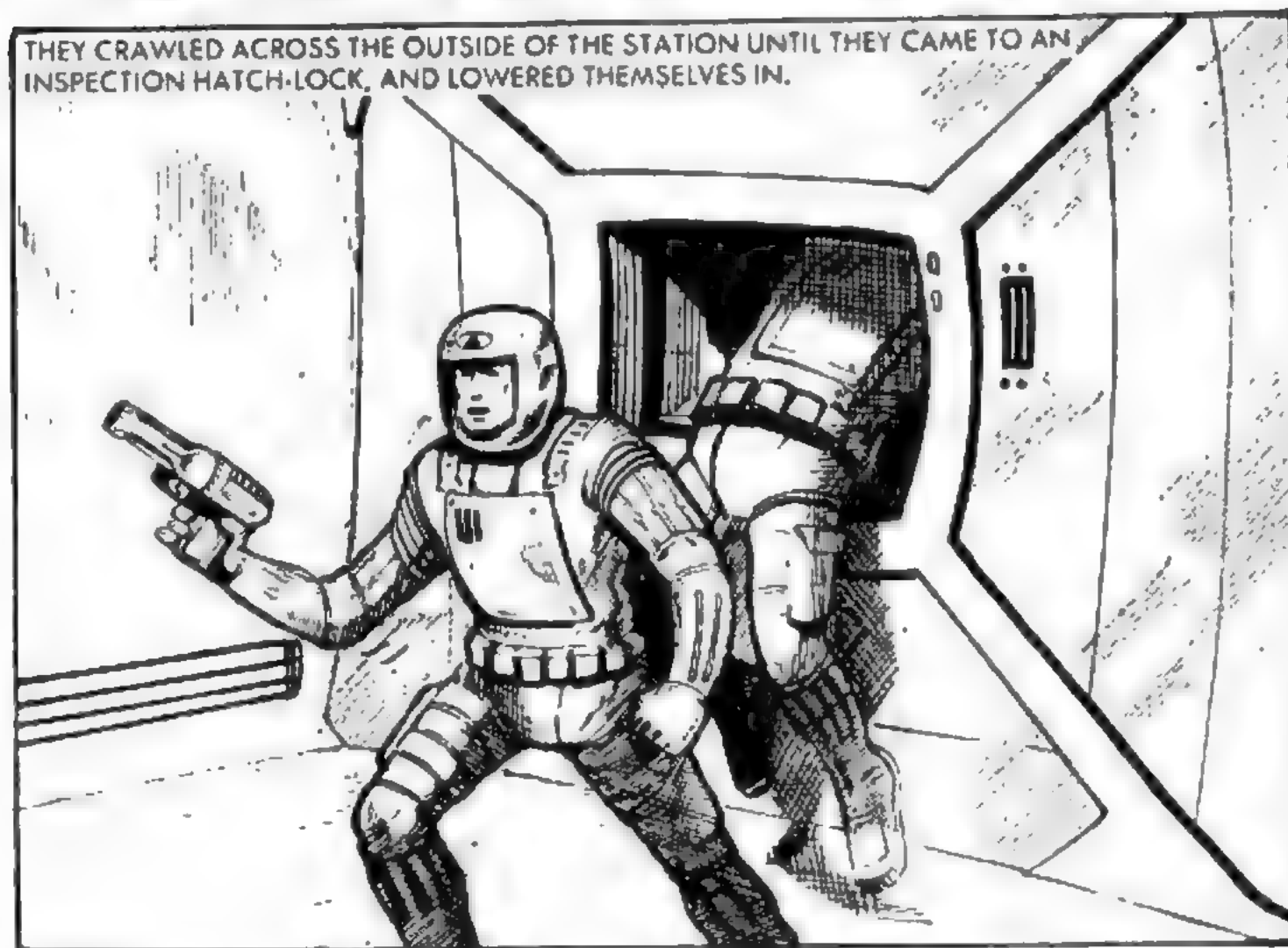
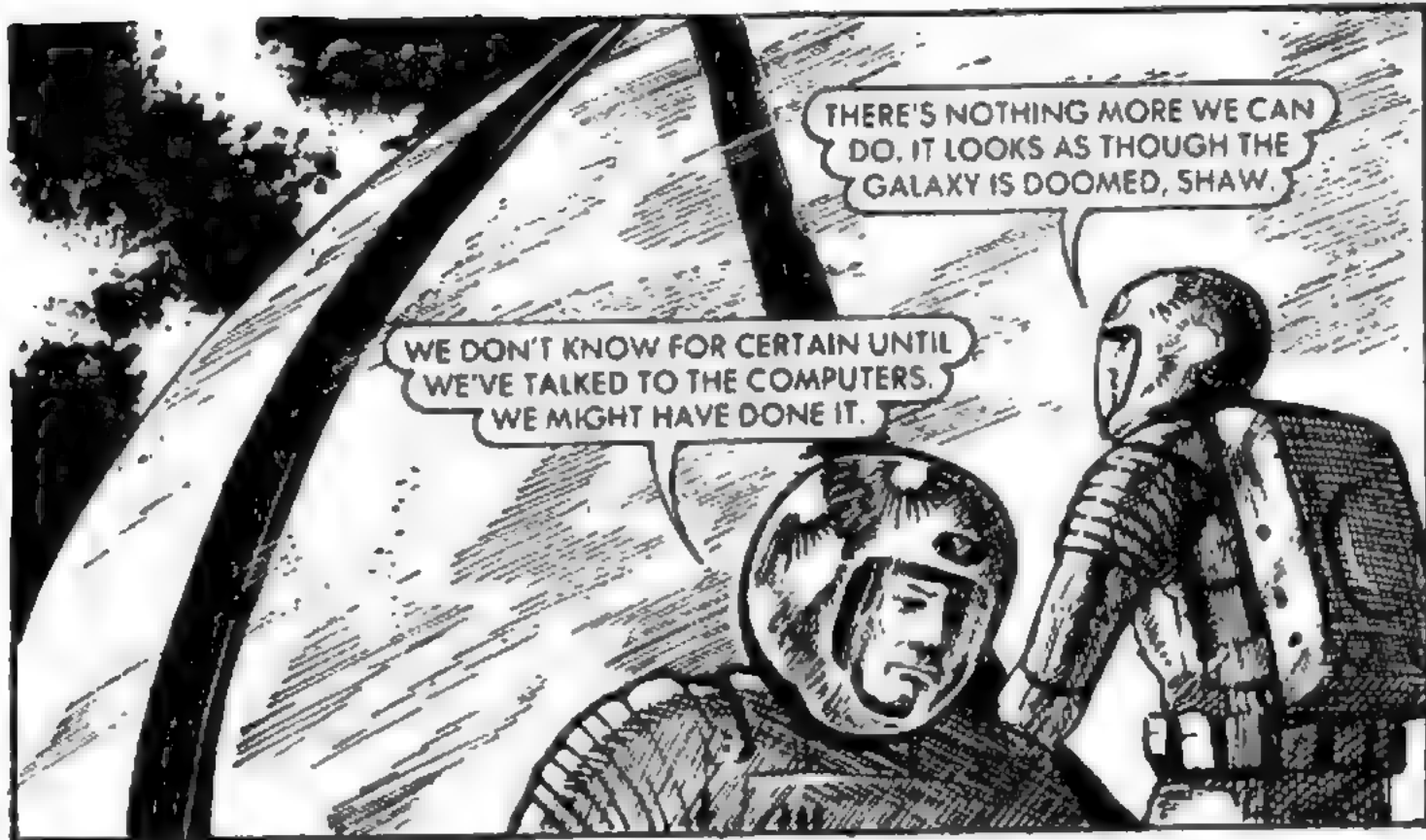
AS THEY CLAWED THEIR WAY OUT OF THE PROJECTOR IT ERUPTED A BLAZING
VOLCANO OF ENERGY!

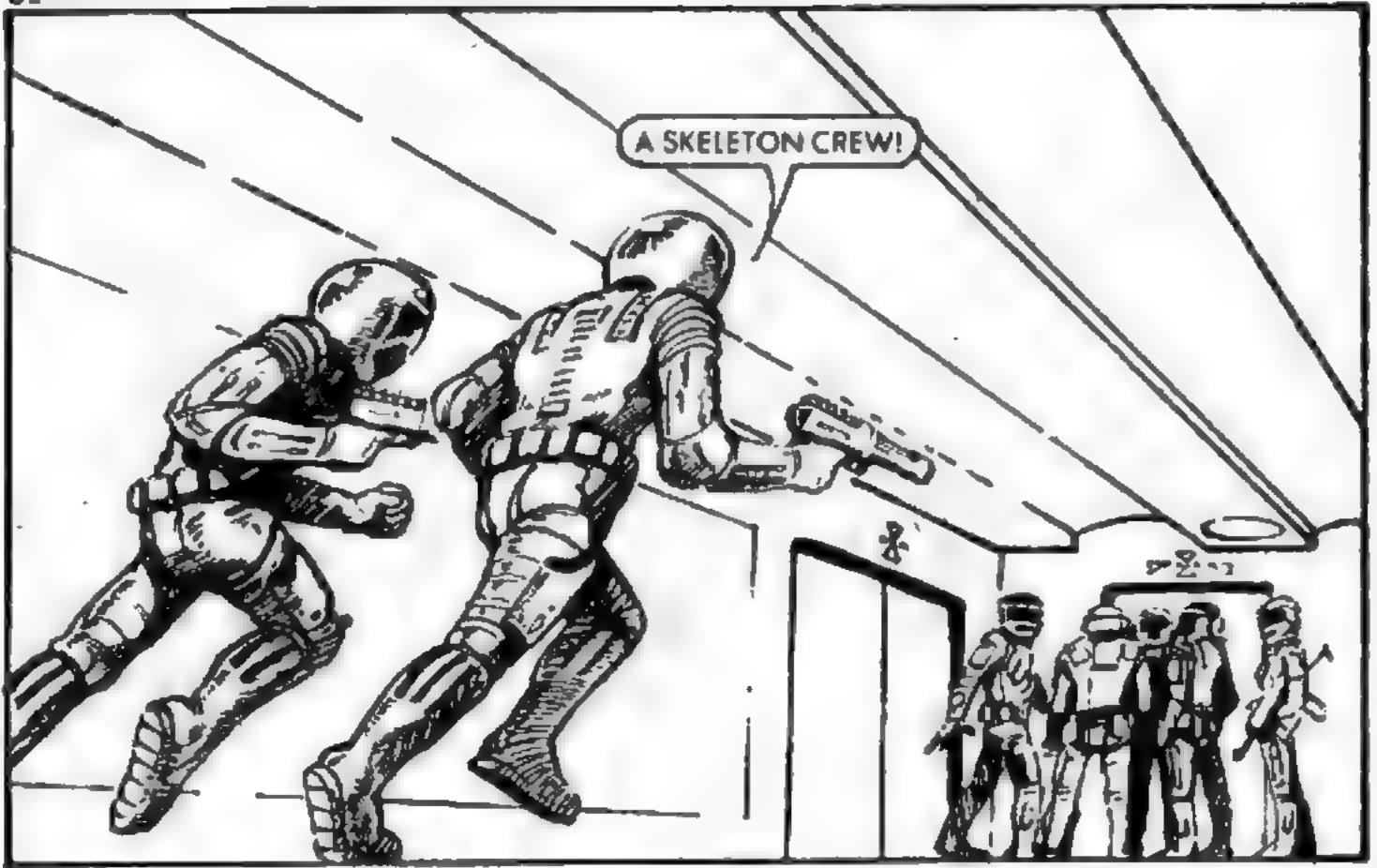
WE MADE IT!

BUT IF YOUR UNIT DRAINED, THEN IT MEANS
THAT THE OTHER ONE DID AS WELL! WE'VE FAILED!

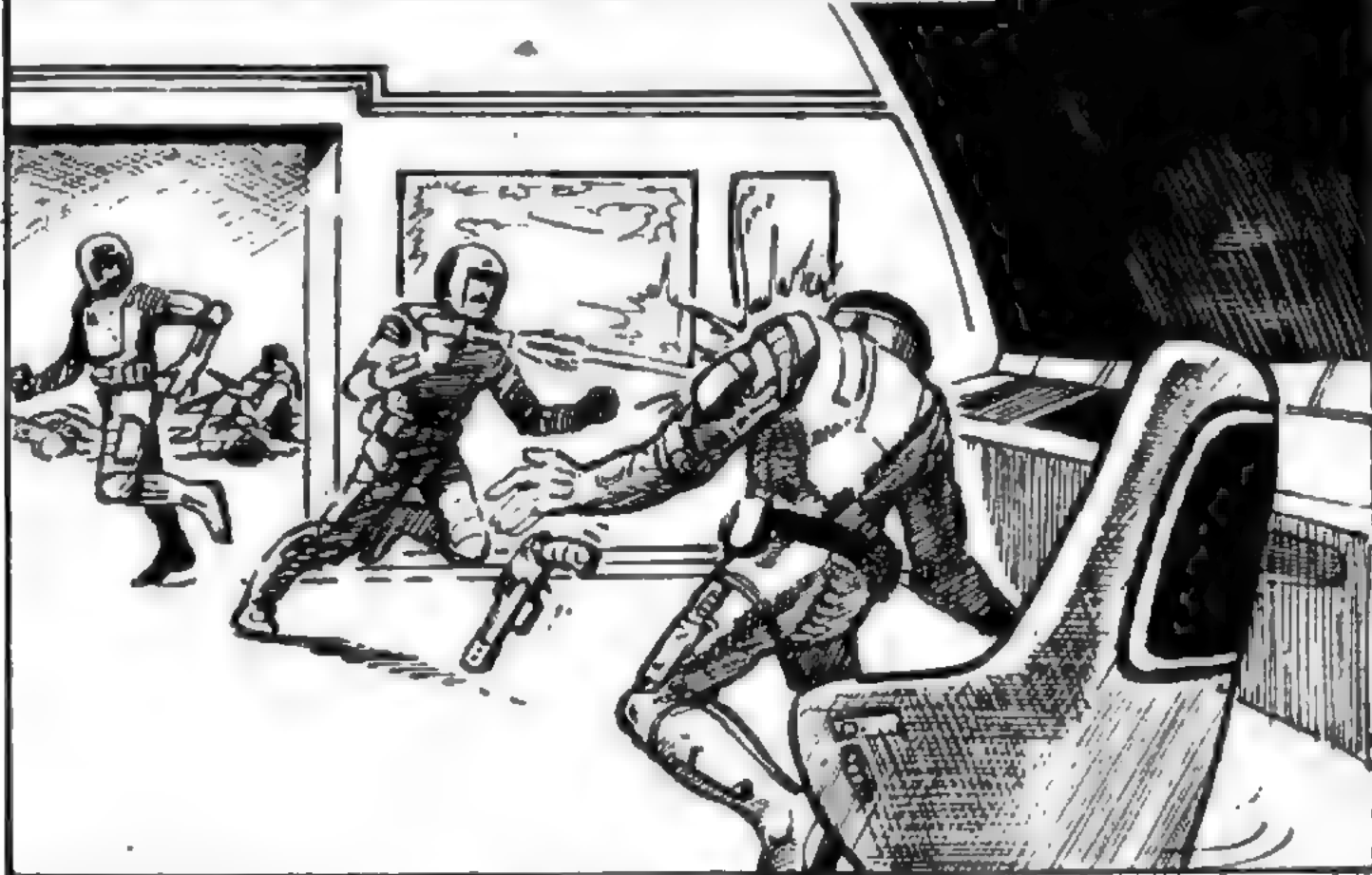
AT THE DARGA STORAGE STATION, TROOPS MARCHED INTO POSITION TO BE INSTANTLY CONVERTED INTO AN ENERGY BEAM THAT BLAZED UP TO THE SPACE STATION AND FIRED OUT TO CROSSROADS







INSIDE THE BRIDGE THE CONTROLLING PORGAN MET THE SAME FATE



AS THE DOME FILLED WITH ENERGY, TARG MADE FOR THE DOOR.

ANOTHER DELIVERY OF PORGAN
KILLERS! I'M GOING TO DIE
FIGHTING, AND TAKE A LOT OF
THEM WITH ME!

NO, WAIT! THEY'RE
OUR STAR TROOPERS!

THE GALAXY'S TOUGHEST TROOPS FANNED OUT THROUGH THE DOME

THEY MUST HAVE
BEAMED THROUGH—
BUT WHY?

B2



IN MINUTES IT WAS ALL OVER.

WE TRIED AN ANTI-
GRAVITY DEVICE TO
DEFLECT A NEUTRON
BOMB AND TROOPS, BUT
WE WERE SURE IT HAD
FAILED.

IT WORKED OKAY. AT LEAST LONG ENOUGH TO
DEFLECT THE BOMB AND TROOPS PAST THE BEAM
STATION. OUR SENSORS DETECTED A MASSIVE
NEUTRON EXPLOSION, AND SHORTLY
AFTERWARDS PORGAN ARMOUR AND SUPPLIES
BEGAN POURING IN. THAT'S WHEN WE BEAMED
HERE TO INVESTIGATE.

AND NOW WE'RE GOING TO START AN
INVASION OF OUR OWN.

BUT WHAT'S HAPPENED
TO THE PORGAN
TROOPERS?

WITHOUT A REMATERIALISER TO CATCH
THEM, THEY'LL JUST KEEP ON GOING FOR
EVER AND EVER!



THEY'LL BE LIKE A SUPER COMET BLAZING
ACROSS THE UNIVERSE! THEY WON'T
CONQUER ANY GALAXIES, BUT THEY'LL
CERTAINLY VISIT MOST OF THEM!

MANY MYSTERIOUS BODIES BURN THROUGH OUR HEAVENS. SOME ARE CRAFT FROM
OTHER GALAXIES, SOME ARE COMETS AND ONE IS THE PORGAN BATTLEFORCE—
ENTOMBED IN INFINITY—FOREVER!

COME STARBLAZING

with the other

STARBLAZER

SPACE ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 26

12p



ALIEN CONTACT

ALSO ON SALE THIS MONTH

STARBLAZERS

IN THE CONQUEST OF SPACE 27



The monster rocket, Saturn 5, was designed to launch the first men to the Moon. The first unmanned test flight of a Saturn 5 was made from Cape Kennedy in November 1967. The rocket could be seen and heard miles away as it roared into space beneath a giant tongue of flame.